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The Immigrant Jew in America

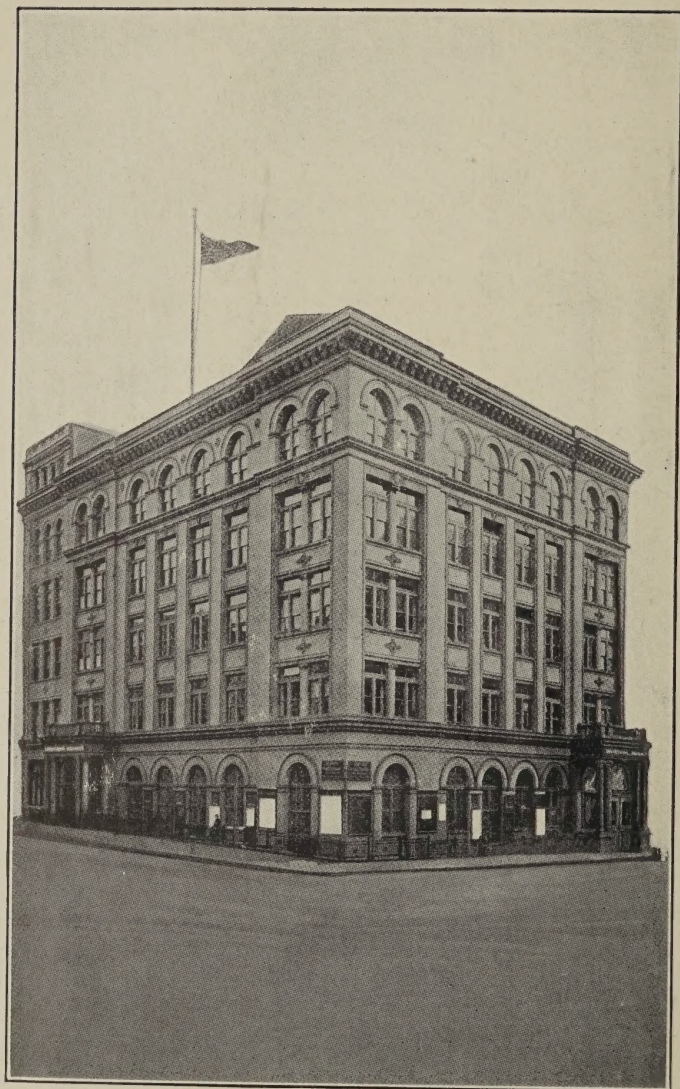












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# THE IMMIGRANT JEW IN AMERICA

BY

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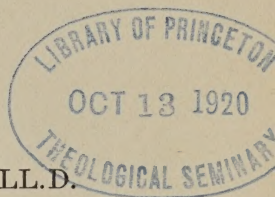
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## PREFACE

The study of the immigrant Jew in America undertaken in this work has been subdivided designedly to assure a competence and accuracy of report beyond the possible attainment of any single investigator. Absolutely no restriction beyond the necessary limitation of space was imposed on any contributor, for none were engaged whose reliability and special knowledge of the assigned field of inquiry were open to question. The consequent independence of view gives exceptional weight to the substantial concurrence of the reports in each division of the field in their exhibit of the characteristics, conditions, and advance of the Jewish emigration to this country from Russia.

Our work begins with a clear marking of the distinct elements of the Jewish population in the United States. This is followed by an informing exhibit of the Jew and his environment in Russia and of the oppression which has fettered his progress and denied him even a bare pittance and right to life, irresistibly forcing him to seek a refuge and home in other lands. This general introduction closes with a comprehensive survey of the entry of the persecuted immigrant into the United States and the progress of his adaptation to the novel conditions of life in this land of the free.

In the following divisions of the work the studies of characteristics and condition are pursued in detail. The chief seats of Jewish settlement in this country, in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, are selected for the range of their exhibits, presenting the struggles and progress of the Jew under the most exacting conditions of living and competition in this country.

These settlements are first surveyed broadly with graphic presentations of the general aspect. Then in succession the social conditions and life are presented under the headings of philanthropy, covering the organizations of relief and the promotion of self-help, economic and industrial conditions, religious activity, educational influences, amusements and social life, politics, health and sanitation, law and litigation.

In the closing division of the work the present distribution of the Jew in America is considered, and the methods in force for its promotion are described. The rural settlements of the Jews in the Eastern and Western States are carefully considered, and the evidence clearly demonstrates the feasibility of a much more wide ranging and thorough distribution than has heretofore been effected, and urgently impresses the importance of adequate provision for this need, which our national government should unhesitatingly promote.

No survey of this subject which approaches this investigation in compass has heretofore been attempted. The sustained effort is clearly for the thorough probing of existing social conditions and accuracy of reporting, irrespective of possible effect. This characteristic thoroughness of examination and faithfulness of portrayal make this exhibit of the Russian Jew in this country a compendious text-book for all students of our complex sociology, and a reference work indispensable to all who are called upon to discuss or write or legislate on the subject of immigration and social conditions in this country.

The conclusions reached by the investigators fully sustain the just appreciations of the character of the Jewish race and its certain advance in this country, which were so memorably furnished by ex-President Grover Cleveland, President Eliot of Harvard University, Bishop Lawrence, and others, on the occasion of the commemoration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of the Jews in the United States. "For the whole civilized world," as President Eliot observes, "this race has been the source of all the highest conceptions of God, man, and nature," and, "if ever any race came hither in search of liberty and equality before the law, and of the safety and prosperity which industry and virtue can win in a fresh land under just conditions, it is the Jews who have come to the United States since 1880."

President Eliot attributes the extraordinary Jewish power of endurance and survival to their religious faith and the singular purity, tenderness, and devotion of their family relations. No one will underrate the importance of these factors, but there must enter into the reckoning also, as our contributors point out, the effect of the conditions and environment of the life of the European Jew for nearly two thousand years. Variety of climate, repeated changes of habit, and attempts at acclimatization have wrought great



changes in the physical organization of the race. Cruel weeding-out processes under the ban of persecution have destroyed the weaker ones and keenly sharpened the senses and developed the brains of those brave and enduring enough to withstand the strain. Only those most resistant to the effects of disease, those who could adapt themselves most surely and quickly to hard conditions, survived. Thus the exhibit of the modern Jew is, in a word, an illustration of the "survival of the fittest," for the immunity thus hardly gained has been transmitted from generation to generation.

The importance of this exceptional vitality and resistance to disease concerns not only the future of the race in this country, but the protection also of other elements of our population. The mortality rate of the Jew averages lower than that of any nationality emigrating to America, and there is relatively little fear of the spread of any contagion from the entry of the Jewish emigrant. Although the Russian Jew comes from a country where typhus and smallpox are endemic, and cholera often ranges epidemically, he has never brought these diseases with him. Even during 1891 and 1894, when cholera was raging in Russia, the numerous Jewish immigrants did not import it into the United States. Moreover, the vitality of the Jew is comparatively untainted by alcoholism and foul blood diseases.

Beyond any other nationality, too, the Jew in America cares for his own poor and needy. The poorest Jew has an ingrained horror of pauperism, and there are few, indeed, who will beg charity except at the last extremity of need. Even under the most distressing conditions in this country, in the grinding competition of the turmoil of great New York, there are practically no Jewish street beggars, and the quoted official record of the Department of Charities in 1905 shows that there were only twenty-six pauper Jews in the almshouse on Blackwell's Island, a truly amazing exhibit in view of a Jewish population exceeding seven hundred thousand roundly in the boroughs of Brooklyn, Manhattan, and the Bronx. Let it be borne in mind, too, that the majority of these paupers had some peculiar defect which barred their admission to existing charitable Jewish institutions.

Who can justly point to any burden imposed upon the public charities of our country through the coming of these poor refugees to our shores? And there is a further fact of the utmost significance and consequence, there are practically no American-born Jewish poor. Of the 10,334 families who

applied for aid to the United Hebrew Charities of New York in one fiscal year, only two per cent. were born in the United States, and of this small percentage the majority of the heads of families were of the first generation. Jewish dependents who have an ancestry in the United States for more than two generations are virtually unknown.

Under the worst prevailing conditions the Jew in America can point with pride, furthermore, to his comparative record of criminality. The abused Russian Jews furnish a lower percentage of criminals than their proportion of the population. In Auburn prison there are generally less than a dozen Jewish convicts, sentenced for heinous crimes, out of a total of more than thirteen hundred convict inmates.

The progress of the Russian Jew in this country is sure and constant, in spite of his poverty and distressful start. The adult immigrants, as a rule, struggle along patiently and honestly, making gradually a more and more decent home and livelihood for themselves, and sparing no privation to secure the education and advance of their children. In our public schools the Jewish scholars are, as a rule, bright, attentive, and studious. They excel in mathematics, English, and history. They show special aptitude for studies appealing to the imagination, and the enthusiasm of even the littlest children for the free flag that covers them is a sight to stir the heart of the most heedless scoffer at the immigrant.

The Jewish facility of adaptation and the progress of assimilation in this country are incontestable. The noted congestion in the larger cities is a drag weight upon progress which should be lifted through the promotion of better distribution.

It is hardly necessary to say that I am not personally responsible for statements of fact or views of policy expressed in the present book. The various authors are, each in his own department, experts whose statements and opinions stand in need of no support or criticism of mine.

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**I**  
**INTRODUCTORY**

## INTRODUCTORY

### (A) ELEMENTS OF THE JEWISH POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Cutting down through two centuries and a half of American Jewish history lays bare three distinctly marked strata of population: the Spanish-Portuguese, the German, and the Russian. This apparently presents a simple study in population, all the simpler as the German stream of immigration did not flow in until the Sephardic settlement had had ample time and opportunity to work out its potentialities. To a less degree, the same exclusive dominance was granted the German Jew during his shorter period, coextensive, roughly speaking, with the nineteenth century. But on closer examination the problem is not so simple. Or, to put it in other words, the influences exerted by each of the three elements of the Jewish population of the United States are subtler, more varied, dependent upon a greater number of constituent factors, than appears from their bare enumeration.

The Spanish-Portuguese population was not a unit. Some of its members came to the American colonies direct from Portugal; others came after residence in Holland, or in Holland and England; others again by way of Brazil or the Dutch colonies in South America and the French colonies in the West Indies. Such wanderings betoken an adventurous spirit and a history of romantic episode, which, in turn, indicate differentiated experiences, varied opinions, and a broad outlook upon affairs, with pliant ability to grasp and utilize a situation, however new and unexpected. Paradoxical as it may seem, the very cosmopolitanism and variety of their experiences were calculated to weld them into a single community. Their secular needs and ambitions were so comprehensive and diversified as to give full scope to their cultivated and tried powers. In their Jewish life they could be content to sink differences, and so to the outsider they had the appearance



of a homogeneous body. That does not necessarily imply perfect harmony or stagnancy in the Sephardic congregations. The vestry rooms were the scenes of lively discussions that inflicted heart-burning, and caused recriminations. But whatever may have convulsed the small community from within, to the world, in spite of its divers origins, it presented a solid front.

The aspect changed completely with the advent of the German Jewish immigrant. That a deep gulf yawned between the Sephardic and Ashkenazic sections of the Jewish community, was but a repetition of Jewish history elsewhere. It was equally a repetition of the course of Jewish history elsewhere that this division should exist in spite of the fact that in a number of well-known instances the straggling immigrants from Germany, arriving from the middle or perhaps the beginning of the eighteenth century to its close, became the very backbone and sinew of the congregation of older establishment, adopting its ritual and customs, and intermarrying with its sons and daughters. But when the stream of German immigration became more steady, as it did in the early years of the nineteenth century, and was reinforced by Polish-Dutch and Dutch-English tributaries, a new phase developed. The small Sephardic communities, in defense of their own individuality, could not, and, by reason of their *hidalgo* pride, would not, continue to absorb the new element. On the other hand, the prominent, useful individuals of the German section felt the propriety of devoting themselves to the needs of their countrymen.

The separation between the German and the Sephardic community, then, displays no features peculiar to American conditions. But the splitting up of the German community from within is of importance in the development of American Jewish life. Coming, for the greater part, direct from the villages of South and of North Germany, the immigrants arrived fully panoplied in their provincialism. The peculiarities of ritual and custom developed under the influence of German and Dutch particularism were dearer to their hearts than the great underlying principles. This is a statement of fact, not a criticism, certainly not derogatory criticism, for the fulness of communal activity and emotion manifests itself through Jewish ceremonial, and not in speculation, which is the prerogative reserved for the few. Congregations were

naturally formed according to propinquity in the Old World. However, the principle of close fellowship between "Landsleute" soon, in the face of common trials and common problems, lost whatever rigidity it may have possessed, and ceded first place to a stronger reason operating in the direction of division of forces. The sprinkling of immigrants from the German cities, whose horizon was wider, and whose less simple experience might have tended to level differences, as in the case of the Sephardim, served to introduce a new element of separation. They transplanted to America the German reform agitation. The Charleston Sephardic congregation had, to be sure, divided upon the question of innovations, but as a movement reform was directed by the German Jews. Thus, both the secular and the religious past of the German immigrants inclined them to fall into autonomous groups, determined by their various German origins geographically considered, and by their attitude toward orthodoxy and reform.

These provincial and disintegrating features prevailed in communal organization until after the great German immigration of 1848, which imported charity problems, greater numbers, more cultivated intelligences, and the alertness of thought characteristic of world-moving events, all of them factors conducive to union in the face of differences of faith and living.

The communal organization effected by the German-Jewish immigration of 1848 and the twenty years following, was considerably promoted by smaller streams of Ashkenazic, though not specifically German, origin. America began to draw forces from the centres of Jewish population farther and farther east. From the first years of Ashkenazic immigration, probably a little before the middle and possibly at the beginning of the eighteenth century, there had been a slight, an almost infinitesimal infusion of Polish and Bohemian elements. After Kosuth's revolution, with its profound stirring up of the Jewish community, and, again, after Polish national enthusiasm flamed up in the early sixties promising emancipation to the Jew, Hungarian, Bohemian, Moravian, and Polish Jews came to America in perceptible numbers, as a result of the general agitation, forming a contingent which the historian can disregard only at his peril.

These smaller currents of Ashkenazic influence served

a purpose. The Sephardic tradition was permeated with memories of mediæval Jewish scholarship and literary achievement, and the cradle of modern Jewish science, of the *Wissenschaft des Judenthums*, stood in Germany, the birthplace of the larger number of Jews in the United States. Yet, at the time when Hungarian and Polish Jews entered into the complex of American-Jewish life, Jewish learning not only was in a bad way in America, but it did not even form part of American-Jewish consciousness as a separate and distinct field of Jewish activity. The making of communities, the establishment of charitable societies, the adjustment of fresh generations of immigrants to new economic conditions, occupied the whole time of the leaders of the people. Such feeble beginnings of educational activity as were called into being by heroic, advanced effort bore no faint resemblance to Jewish learning. The immigrant from eastern Europe, if not himself a scholar, at least had an appreciation of Jewish scholarship. His close communal organization at home had borne in upon his mind a vivid realization of how vitally Jewish science is connected with Jewish life. His religious conformity was based upon a clearer valuation of reasons and origins than the rigid orthodoxy or the reform aspirations of the German Jews.

This appreciation of Jewish learning on the part of Austro-Hungarian and Polish immigrants, and all it implies with regard to Jewish habits of living, did, indeed, make no perceptible change in conditions, the less so as the German Jews comprehensively pronounced the doom of scorn upon them as "Hinter Berliner," and so made abortive whatever power they had to exercise influence. Yet the characteristic distinguishing them from the earlier immigrants did not fail of leaving its impress. While they were entering congregations as a leaven, and were drawing rabbis and teachers from their own countries to America, the great Russian catastrophe was approaching. When the blow fell, the only preparation the bulk of the Jewish population in the United States had had for the task of assimilating a large and almost alien element was derived from the attitude toward Jewish questions taken by its Hungarian and Polish members. They were the missing link that in time was to bring to the consciousness of the German Jews the kinship existing between themselves and the shoals of immigrants from the Pale. At



the time of the influx, they were aware neither of the closeness of the tie, nor of the fact that they had long had among them living examples of the gradations existing in Ashkenazic Judaism. Much as the German Jews from Germany differed among themselves in minor customs and practices, the temper of their minds with regard to Judaism was practically uniform, a statement that embraces the orthodox as well as the reform wing. Here they were confronted suddenly, as they first thought, by an entirely new development of Jewish thought, and their spontaneous impulse was to repudiate it. As the stream of Russian immigration continued unabated, facts of earlier and of later occurrence co-ordinated themselves, and the scorn once poured out upon the "Polack," or, generically, the "Hinter Berliner," since it was the only channel through which knowledge flowed, brought about the first adjustment to the vast problem. The German Jews gradually realized that the Hungarians and Poles had been but the vanguard of the largest contingent in the Jewish army. It was a sobering realization, and it summoned from the recesses of the communal mind all lessons unconsciously learnt from a distinct and peculiar element, once present in small proportions, and now augmented to a host larger than the German-Jewish detachment itself—and perhaps more resourceful, materially and spiritually.

The Russian Jewish element defies analysis. With its Lithuanian, Volhynian, Bessarabian, and other constituents, and its Galician, Polish, and Roumanian tributary streams, it is more complex than either of the other two. Besides, we are still caught in the eddies and currents of the Russian migration, and are being thrown hither and thither by it. Hazardous as it is to make generalizations about the century just closed, it is after all not illegitimate. But to say what the Russian Jew is and can be in America is to prophesy the course of the twentieth century. It may not be too presumptuous, however, to point out one of the ways in which the Russian population promises to affect the organization of Judaism in America.

If the Spanish-Portuguese population contained various elements, and if the German population was welded together only by the force of circumstances, the Russian population carries the tendency toward grouping and segregation to the length of a fault. The Anshe Kowno

and the Anshe Jitomir and the "Men of every Russian Hamlet" lead separate existences in the effort to perpetuate the home traditions. Subjectively, from the point of view of the Russian Jew himself, this is a mistake, however pardonable in the circumstances, and a fault, however amiable and attractive to the folklore student and the story writer. Objectively, it may turn out to be a valuable factor in the creation of the Jewish type in America. The common welfare will be furthered beyond expression by transplanting to the new soil every possible variation of the Jewish ideal, as it has been modified in all the countries of the Jewish dispersion. Only by retaining its identity for a little while after its arrival in America, only by permitting its peculiar, unabridged heritage of intellect and feeling to be modified by the "sweetness and light" issuing from free American political and social institutions, can each group do this service to the Jewish community of the future, the Jewish community that shall be all Jewish — not Sephardic, not German, not Russian, not even American, but simply and solely Jewish.

For instance, the Chassidistic movement is now represented in this country by numerous congregations bearing chiefly the title Anshe Sfard. Far removed as American Jewry of the nineteenth century was from sympathy with, or intellectual appreciation of what the Anshe Sfard stand for, there is no telling what a rejuvenating and spiritualizing influence their presence may exert when their constituents or the children of their constituents enter into American life, provided they enter it, not with a careless throwing aside of their heirloom, but with full consciousness of the strength of the strands they are weaving into its woof. They may turn out to be the clasp uniting the first and the last link in the chain of elements composing Judaism in America. Isaac Luria, a mystic of German descent, in the sixteenth century modifies the Sephardic ritual to suit his Kabbalistic fancy, and his prayer book, in turn, satisfies the devout yearnings of the followers of the Baal Shem, some of whose descendants, the very Anshe Sfard just mentioned, are now engaged in the desperate struggle for existence in America. What a pregnant bit of history! When once it is understood, it will make for solidarity, binding together the Spanish-Portuguese community of two hundred and fifty years' standing with the latest and humblest comer!

So each group, if its characteristics are studied in the light of history, and when once these characteristics are toned down by contact with other conceptions of life and Judaism, will be a source of strength and completer union. The particularism of the German Jew disappeared only in the presence of extra-congregational needs and forces; the individualism of the Russian Jew will be converted into a communal power when he realizes his unifying religious mission in Jewish America.

At present, by reason of their tendency to break up into small groups, the Russian Jews are looked upon by their patrons and by their own leaders as the most unorganizable material among the Jews, who at best are not distinguished for the quality of being organizable. To the keener observer it would appear that the disintegration in Russian-Jewish ranks, the almost foolish segregation recklessly indulged in, is a passing feature of a period of upheaval. It is the manifestation of reserve energy that cannot yet find an outlet in the secular life, a reaction from workaday struggles and anxieties, with a just admixture of desire to show self-reliance and initiative. The time is not distant when the Russian Jew will have solved the elementary problems of American existence, and will be prepared to take up the more soul-satisfying pursuits open to the politically and intellectually acclimatized citizen. His spiritual energies will flow in quieter channels without abating a jot of their force and fervor. The differences between group and group will have been worn off by attrition, and the common ideal will have been disengaged as the important rallying-point.

In this direction Zionism is doing admirable work for the Russian Jew in America. It is teaching him the uses of co-operation, and of that degree of organization in Jewish matters which comports with freedom of spiritual development. Under its influence, the Russian Jews will give up their separate, somewhat distrustful existence, and the separate institutions, doubtless not without educative value in this transition period, which they are creating by the score in all the larger cities. They will soon reach the point at which they will turn for guidance to the history of the Germans and of their Sephardic predecessors. Eschewing the foolish pride of both, they will emulate the dignity and self-respect of the latter, and the sobriety and the steadiness of purpose of the former. They will



use the institutions created by them as the stock upon which to engraft their intenser fervor, their broader Jewish scholarship, a more enlightened conception of Jewish ideals, and a more inclusive interest in Jewish world questions.

The result will be an United Israel in America, responsive as a body to the calls and aspirations of Israel the world over, showing neither rift nor seam where the disparate elements have been forged together, and strong through the presence of every modification of Jewish character, thought, conviction, and ideal.

## (B) THE JEW IN RUSSIA <sup>1</sup>

There are Hebraists who believe that when the poet of the captivity made Israel exclaim, "Wo is me that I sojourn in Meshech," he had in mind the ancestors of the present Russian nation and a country which now forms part of Russian territory. This would bring the date when Israelite and Muscovite first came in contact back to Biblical times. It is, at any rate, not later than the eighth or ninth century. In the memorable letter written in the tenth century by Joseph, the Jewish king of the Khozars, to Chasdai ibn Shaprut, the Jewish diplomatist of Abdul-Rahman of Cordova, the Russians are first mentioned in connection with Jewish history, and moreover, as adversaries, being enumerated among the nations with whom he was constantly at war. The Russians ultimately overthrew the Khazar kingdom, and large numbers of Khozars and original Jews who were attracted to the Jewish state were dispersed in the Russian dominions. Jews were also found in the many places which one by one fell into Russia's hands in the course of its expansion. The aversion of the Russians to allowing Jews to dwell among them did not manifest itself apparently at this early period.

There are records of Jewish settlements in Kieff and other old towns and of independent communities in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. There were also important Jewish communities in Little Russia and White Russia during the long periods when these provinces formed part of the Lithuanian or Polish dominions. Many Jews also came to Russia in the wake of the Tatar invasion in the thirteenth century, and occupied important positions, mostly as farmers of the revenue, a circumstance which contributed much to increase the sentiment against Jews among the Russians. But Russia proper, that is, modern, autocratic, Greek Catholic Russia, practically never admitted Jews within its boundaries.

<sup>1</sup> This article was written prior to the Kishinev riot of 1903.

Ivan IV., "The Terrible," flatly refused the request of Sigismund August, King of Poland, to allow Lithuanian Jews to trade in Russia. Alexis Michailovitch, the second of the Romanoffs, expelled the Jews from Mohilew when it fell into his hands. It was, therefore, after the acquisition of Lithuania and other parts of dismembered Poland that Russia found itself ruling over vast numbers of Jews whom it could not easily expel, and it is only since that time that the history of the Jews in Russia really commences.

The Polish and Lithuanian Jews whom we now call by the collective name of Jews of Russia are mostly of German extraction. Little is known of the Jews in Poland before the first Crusade at the end of the eleventh century. There is every reason to believe, however, that there were Jewish settlements in Poland before that period and that its members, like the Jews of early Russia, spoke the Slavic language of their Gentile neighbors. But the steady influx of Jews from Germany after each of the long series of persecutions which began in that country with the first Crusade brought about a preponderance of the German element among the Jews of Poland, even to the extent of forcing the minority to adopt the language of the new arrivals. This is not the only instance of a foreign tongue being forced by a great mass of Jewish immigrants on small, indigenous Jewish communities. There are Jews in the Barbary states in northern Africa whose forefathers came there with their fierce countrymen at the time of the Mohammedan invasion, direct from the plains and deserts of Arabia. But the numbers of Spanish Jews who followed during the great persecutions of the fourteenth century, and after their expulsion at the end of the fifteenth century, so overwhelmed them in numbers and intelligence that we now find descendants of Arabian tribesmen who never set foot on the Pyrenean peninsula using as their mother tongue the corrupt Spanish dialect known as Ladino. So, too, we find in Russia, Jews descended from Khozars or from Babylonian Jews who came to their present abode by way of Persia and the Caucasus, from Turkestan or from Kurdistan, now speaking the imported mixed German dialect which for want of a better name we call Yiddish. The remnants of the Russian-speaking and Polish-speaking Jewish communities were rooted out during the terrible massacres at the time

of the rising of the Haidomaki, or Cossacks, under Bogdan Chmielnicki in 1648-49, when entire communities were exterminated and nearly a quarter million Jews lost their lives. Allowing for local variations in the characteristics and the dialects of different provinces and for foreign influences in the border governments, the Yiddish-speaking, semi-Germanic, Polish, and Lithuanian Jews that came under Russian rule at the end of the eighteenth century formed an almost homogeneous entity.

This mass was a secluded and degraded middle class little in touch with the current of Polish national feeling; for the persecutions and restrictive measures of the last two centuries of Polish misrule reduced what was the happiest Jewry in Europe during the Middle Ages to the lowest depths of servility and stupor. Catharine II. was too busy and Paul I. too mad to take important steps to solve the Jewish problem, which now became one of the great problems of the empire. Alexander I. was the first who seriously attempted to do something toward that end. He opened to the Jews what little educational facilities Russia had at that time, and he is reported to have said that he would be well satisfied, indeed, if all that was spent under him for Jewish education should contribute to the production of one man like Mendelssohn. The good monarch did not stop to consider that a nation must first be able to produce a Herder, a Lessing, a Kant, or a Lavater before a Mendelssohn could rise in its midst. Mendelssohn's greatness lay not in his philosophy. That part of Poland over which Alexander I. ruled, produced, in the eighteenth century, a much profounder metaphysician than the sage of Dessau, namely, Salomon Maimon. But Mendelssohn, the polite scholar and man of the world, living among a nation that had already attained a high degree of culture and refinement, had only to teach his fellow Jews by example to adjust themselves to the surrounding circumstances, to learn the language and the manners of their Christian neighbors, so as to be fit for emancipation. True, it would greatly benefit the Jews of Russia if they adopted the Russian language as their mother tongue. But here the analogy ends. Bad as the condition of the Jews was then and is now — and were it even much worse, — it would still be a retrogressive step for them to pattern themselves after the Russians, that is, to place themselves on their low material or mental level.



This inferiority of the vast majority of the Russian people makes it difficult for outsiders to comprehend and for the government to solve the vexatious Jewish problem. A foreigner who takes a flying trip to Russia, stops at first-class hotels, converses in French with university-bred men, and beholds, figuratively speaking, through the window of his car or equipage, the thin veneer of civilization which can be imported for money, usually reaches the conclusion that Russia occupies as high a position in the scale of civilization as the United States, for example; perhaps a higher one. But the truth is that the Russians — that is eighty-five or ninety per cent. of them — are so much below everything we know here that we would have to go to the illiterate Southern negro for a familiar example of their mental capacity. The Russian may be styled the unhappy medium between the Asiatic and the European, possessing the low cunning of the former without his stoicism and the brutal aggressiveness of the latter without his fairness or activity. Left to himself, the Russian is a most helpless human being and the willing slave of every one who wants to be his master. The percentage of Jews, Germans, Poles, and other non-Russians among the artists, scholars, merchants, and manufacturers, and even among the government employees of Russia, is so large, in spite of all the favors shown to Russians, and all the disadvantages under which the non-Russians have to labor, as almost to justify Pobiedonostseff's statement that the Jews must be discriminated against because the Russians are not able to compete with them on equal terms. This is the real cause of the persecutions and of the special laws, and it makes improvement of the Jews largely contingent on the improvement of the condition of the Russians.

Naturally, the government of Russia never admitted that it was the Russian and not the Jew who must be lifted up in order to bring about a solution of the problem. Its policy toward the Jews was, from the beginning, mostly in the direction of forcing him out of his natural position as the middleman, as the artisan-trader, and of turning him, often by the most cruel and violent means, into the ranks of the agricultural laborer, the journeyman, and the factory hand, positions for which he has no special aptitude. The well-meaning, but rather feeble, Alexander I. did not accomplish much, and his successor, the iron-

willed and energetic Nicholas I., evinced such a strong desire to convert the Jews of his dominion to the Greek Catholic religion that they looked with suspicion even on the efforts he earnestly made in other directions to improve their condition. His enterprises in behalf of Jewish education, which were made through his minister of education, the illustrious Count Ouvaroff, are especially interesting because they made a lasting impression on the development of Russo-Jewish intelligence, and are a fair sample of the method by which the Russian government deals with the Jews.

It was evident that the Jews were too much absorbed in the study of the Talmud and paid too little attention to secular education. But the knowledge of the Talmud in those days and, to some extent, even now, brought rich rewards in communal distinction and was considered the *sine qua non* of superiority. The Jewish opponents of the exclusive study of the Talmud were the small and uninfluential circles of maskilim, the devotees of the Mendelssohnian enlightenment which penetrated into Russia through the efforts of Mendelssohn's numerous Polish and Lithuanian pupils late in the eighteenth and early in the nineteenth century. These maskilim, "the friends of light," who believed in the regeneration of Israel by means of the knowledge of Hebrew and German, were made known to Ouvaroff by the late Dr. Lilienthal, who discovered them while traveling as the agent of the Russian government for the purpose of establishing elementary schools in the Jewish communities. Ouvaroff sided with the maskilim and was so much influenced by their opinions of what Russian Jews ought to study that he told Sir Moses Montefiore, when the latter visited St. Petersburg in 1846, of his efforts "to force the Jews to study their own language." The rabbinical schools or seminaries which were founded in Wilna and Zhitomir in 1848 were practically managed by the maskilim, and according to their ideas. But the new rabbis who were to influence the Jews to accept modern ideas and to become more Russianized lacked the chief requisite for the rabbinical office in Russia, the knowledge of the Talmud. The conservative masses never took kindly to these seminaries. The graduates, who had a good secular but a poor Jewish education, usually went to the universities and took up other professions; only a small portion became rabbis, and none

obtained prominence as Talmudists. The seminaries continued for about a quarter century, when they were closed because they had failed to accomplish what was expected of them. An earlier attempt in Poland failed even more completely. The rabbinical school of Warsaw, which flourished under the auspices of the maskilim, from 1825 to 1862, had the unique distinction that not one of its pupils ever became a rabbi — unless the “Rev.” Christian David Ginsburg be considered one.

But the maskilim were not the only ones instrumental in the failure of the rabbinical schools to bring about better results. The government, by its efforts to convert the Jews to Christianity, by decreeing measures of persecution, like the expulsion of Jews from places within fifty versts of the frontier, at the time when privileges were granted to educated Jews, caused the religious masses to look with suspicion on the seminaries as on a veiled agency for converting them. The extortionate “candle tax,” which supported the Jewish schools, was also very obnoxious, and helped to make the seminaries hated and despised. Still, had the maskilim of the period paid more deference to the prejudices of the conservative element, and had they recognized the necessity for a successful spiritual leader among the Jews of Russia to be a thorough Talmudist, the seminaries would most probably in time have survived the early prejudices against them, and the perplexing system of two rabbis for each community, one “government rabbi,” a secular scholar who usually knows little or nothing about Judaism, and the other a communal rabbi, who is a Talmudist and knows little of worldly affairs, could have been dispensed with. The rabbinical question is now one of the most vexing that Russian Jewry has to contend with, and the closing by the government of the celebrated Yeshibah (Academy) of Volosin, in 1892, after all its efforts to introduce in it the study of the Russian language had failed, augmented, rather than diminished, the difficulty. A sort of Chautauquan system of educating rabbis introduced by the late Rabbi Isaac Elchanan of Kovno, under which the so-called “Perushim of Kovno” studied — each by himself — has so far not proven very successful.

However, it was only from the religious point of view that the rabbinical seminaries failed to achieve their purpose. It cannot be denied that they did much good in a

general way. The first fifteen years of the reign of Alexander II. (1855-1870), the short so-called "Golden Age" of the Jews of Russia, offered many opportunities for the Jew with a Russian education, and it is no wonder that many of the abler pupils chose to enter careers which were far more promising than the rabbinate. The prejudice against secular education and the suspicion that it leads and is intended to lead to apostasy was still strong, when suddenly under the new liberal regulations, brilliant prospects for every Jew of ability were opened. When the professions and civil service positions were made accessible to Jews the number of those who had the necessary Russian education to be able to avail themselves of the newly offered opportunities was comparatively small. Then came what may be termed a "rush" for education, but before the new generation had finished its course of studies the reaction set in and the opportunities were much diminished. However, the impetus then given is indicated by the desire for education which is one of the chief characteristics of the better class of Russian Jews. Parents who were at first opposed to the desires of their sons to become educated saw their folly and were compelled to admit that their conservatism deprived their children of the attainment of the affluence and distinction enjoyed by the children of the more lenient or the more progressive.

To obtain education and to enjoy the fruits thereof now meant a hard struggle, for only a very small number of Jews were admitted to the universities, and few positions were open for Jewish graduates. Fathers and mothers now seconded their children's desire for education, which was the more ardent the more difficult it became to obtain it. At present, the poorer classes have almost abandoned all hope of having their children educated, being unable to incur the expense necessary to secure one of the few seats reserved for Jews at the higher institutions of learning. It must be remembered that every public favor shown or honor conferred on a Jew in Russia reflects credit on the entire Jewish community. In Russia, as in all countries where the masses are steeped in ignorance, the educated classes form a sort of nobility and are considered much superior to the common people. The Jews, therefore, take pride in every one of their co-religionists who is added to the distinguished class, and this gives a pa-



triotic tinge to the anxiety to become educated and be "an honor to Judaism." This view of education sometimes makes a ludicrous impression when brought over to this country. We often meet here enthusiastic young Russian Jews who fail to comprehend the vast difference between the circumstances of both countries, and continue to act and to speak as if they did a great favor to the Jewish community by taking up the study of law or of medicine.

The above incidents in the history of the development of knowledge among the Jews of Russia may serve to show the haphazard and impractical way in which many projects of reform are undertaken in that country and why they so often miscarry. It is impossible to attempt within the short space allotted to this chapter to give even the faintest outline or the briefest resumé of the immense mass of cruel, foolish, and often contradictory laws and regulations enacted by the Russian government in relation to the Jews. Were it even possible to enumerate them, but an incorrect impression of the status of the Jews would remain, because every official interprets them in his own way or chooses to enforce what at the moment suits his object or his fancy. One may act in one way, while his colleague in a neighboring city may for the same reason decide in a diametrically opposite manner. The only tendency which may be noticed in the anti-Jewish laws is the one mentioned above, to force Jews out of the middle class. The law promulgated by Alexander II. in 1865 permitting Jewish artisans to reside outside of the Pale of Settlement in all parts of the empire was probably the most beneficent measure ever enacted by Russia in favor of the Jews. But it was rendered almost nugatory by the later interpretation that the handicraftsman residing outside the Pale is prohibited from "dealing" in his own products, and may only work to order or for other masters. The Jew was thus deprived of the possibility of becoming the artisan-trader and small merchant-manufacturer of Russia, and occupying a position for which he is well adapted. The last blow at the Jewish middlemen was delivered when the government created the whiskey monopoly, taking it into its own hands and thus depriving about thirty thousand Jewish, and several times as many non-Jewish, families of their means of livelihood. It is interesting to note that even the non-Jewish saloon keepers

in Russia were but seldom Russians. The number of saloons in the Russian empire is much larger than the number of Russians who could keep sober if they happened to be the sole proprietors of bottles and barrels of vodka. In the localities where Jews are not permitted to engage in mercantile pursuits, the liquor business was usually in the hands of Germans, Letts, and other non-Russians. The liquor monopoly has not proven a success so far, but as very few Russians were ruined by it the government may well think the experiment worth trying.

The economic condition of the Jewish masses is probably worst in Lithuania. The Jews of this province, who are intellectually superior to those in other parts of Russia, have the most difficult struggle for existence. The land in Lithuania is poor, and the peasants are sunk in the lowest depths of ignorance and poverty. With the exception of those in Bialystock and a few other unimportant manufacturing centres, the province contains no industries worth speaking of. The "Litvaks," or Lithuanian Jews, are therefore thrown back on their ingenuity and Jewish learning for a living. They were the first immigrants who came to inner Russia, to Germany, to England, and to the United States. They supply the melammedim (teachers), the cantors, the schochetim (authorized slaughterers), and all other sorts of "reverends" for the Jews in the various countries. Probably two-thirds of the Russian Jews outside of Russia or in Russia outside of the Pale are from Lithuania. The most successful Jews in the interior of Russia and at the two capitals come from the same region.

The economic condition of the Jews in Southern Russia, which has Odessa as its centre, is better than in Lithuania, or, at least, was better before the hard times which have prevailed there for the last few years. The fertile soil of that part of the country and the extensive commerce of Odessa contribute much to the prosperity of the district. Bessarabian Jews also had little to complain of until the recent famine which devastated the beautiful province. In Podolia, Volhynia, and the entire part of the country adjacent to the Austrian frontier ignorance and poverty go hand in hand. In Courland, where the German influence strongly predominates and the Jews are, as a rule, highly intelligent, although little acquainted with Jewish learning, matters have of late been going from bad to

worse. The Jews of Poland are probably in a better economic condition than those of any other part of the Russian empire. The government is not so solicitous of the welfare of the Polish peasant as it is of that of the Russian, and does not "protect" him as much from the Jewish exploiter. Thus left to themselves, both the Jews and the peasants are much more prosperous than in Russia. Up to the latest renewal of the government's attempt to Russianize Poland in the most brutal way, Jews could acquire farms and country estates and were permitted to live in villages. In cities, too, they enjoy more privileges than in Russia proper. This does not at all hurt the Christian population, and Poland is to-day in a better economic condition than most parts of Russia. The exiled Jews from Moscow have so developed the industries of Poland, especially of Lodz, that the rapid growth of the population and wealth of the city strongly remind one of some of the most successful American business centres.

One of the most noteworthy contrasts between the economic condition of Russia and of this country is that whereas here extreme poverty is practically confined to the large cities and is almost unknown in small towns and villages, in Russia it is the reverse. The most abject poverty and squalor are to be found in the smaller towns and to move to a large city is considered a step forward, not only because of the opportunity of acquiring education and experience but also on account of the better economic advantages of the larger localities. The reason for this abnormal condition is, in all probability, the general poverty of the peasantry, which renders them small buyers, and the exorbitant taxation, which is very high in proportion to the earning and spending capacity of the people, and which usually oppresses the rural more than the urban population.

The intellectual condition of the Jews of Russia is, on the average, much higher than that of the Russians. There are practically no illiterate male Jews, and there is comparatively little illiteracy among the women, which means much in a country where the number of illiterates is so large. True, many know little more than to read the Hebrew prayer book, but the number of those who know more, especially in Lithuania, is nevertheless quite considerable. Talmudic scholars of various degrees of eminence abound and are highly respected. The educated Jews, in

the modern sense of the term, may be divided into two classes, the maskilim, and those who have the advantage of a Russian education. The first are mostly self-taught Hebraists with a leaning toward German culture. The latter are imbued with the love of the Russian nation and its literature and share that almost childish enthusiasm and impulsiveness which is characteristic of the Russian intelligent youth. In a country like Russia, where only a small number are educated and public opinion is not crystallized, no natural bond of sympathy exists between the higher and the lower classes. The wide gap between them causes the latter to appear more brutal and the former more intellectual, but in reality they are more impractical and given to abstract theorizing. The intelligent Russian is mostly an extremist in whatever views he may happen to entertain, and the Jew, who in all climes and under all conditions imitates the Christian, is no exception in this respect. The maskil, who is usually inclined to abstractions and is interested in science and literature for their own sake, is, as a rule, indifferent to the fate of the masses, condescending only to teach those who evince a desire to join the aristocracy of learning to which he belongs. The Russianized Jew, on the other hand, is more often the enthusiastic lover of the low and the down-trodden. By taking advantage of the welcome reception to all newcomers, given in the circles of the extremely radical, irrespective of faith or descent, he associates with Nihilists, and then tries, with that contempt for expediency and practicability which characterizes this class, to turn the half-savage, wretched Russian laborers into full fledged Socialists, with the result, in most cases, that they become more wretched and expose themselves to useless danger.

This impractical phase of the character of the Russian political radical can be traced to the chief source of Russia's mental weakness, the imitateness of its genius; a high degree of scholarship and culture is attained by the upper classes, because in these matters it is possible to adopt foreign standards. The same may be said of the real progress Russia is making in the fields of industry and, to some extent, of art. Adaptation, adoption, and lack of originality are noticeable everywhere. This is why Russia is perplexed when it comes to problems which it will not or cannot solve according to foreign standards.



It is the pitiful struggle of the unoriginal mind to assert itself in a way beyond its powers which makes the Russian's ideals so vague and indefinite. Perceiving that everything that is great and good and beautiful comes from abroad, the educated Russian is at variance with himself as to the question of civilization. He is attracted and at the same time repelled by the culture of the "rotten West," disliking it as an intruder but being unable to do without it or to substitute for it anything originally Russian. In spite of all, he remains mentally the slave of Western Europe, and is much more influenced by its opinions and its policies than is commonly supposed. The Russians' Pan-slavism and the Russian Jews' Zionism are but local manifestations of the German's *Mordspatriotismus* and the Frenchman's chauvinism. All that is necessary to bring about a reaction in favor of more liberal political ideas and of better treatment for the Jews is a reaction in the same direction in Germany and France, the countries which supply intellectual Russia with ideals and movements. As this is bound to come before very long, in spite of all the evil forebodings of the extreme nationalists among our friends or our enemies, the hope of the Russian Jew for better times at home is not so far from being realized as some pessimists seem to think. The autocracy itself came near being modified or rooted out before the present wave of reactionary nationalism spread over Europe. When it will pass, as others before it have passed, and the liberal element will regain ascendancy, the condition of the Jews will be much improved. The great moral support actively and passively given by Germany, France, and Austria to the autocracy and to Jew-baiting in Russia is entirely unknown to the intelligent American to whom "Europe" often means Great Britain. Therefore, it is difficult to make him, or even the American Jew, believe that the persecutions of the Jews are not of a religious nature but a result of reactionary conservatism which degenerated into vicious tyranny, and for which there is no other remedy than the general advancement of liberal ideas in the countries which pretend, with some reason, to be more civilized than Russia. Russia will certainly follow suit and all its great problems, including the Jewish problem, will be nearer solution when it will again try to deal with them in that spirit of liberalism which influenced its actions in the last generation.

Meanwhile, the outlook is not very promising. Although there can be no doubt of the ultimate prevalence of liberal principles, not even the most optimistic will dare to insist that their advent is imminent. Perhaps a great war which should result in the triumph of a free country would have the same beneficent results as the Crimean war, which preceded the good times under Alexander II. Until the arrival of a more liberal era, migration and emigration are the only palliatives. They cannot be considered remedies, for in spite of the great numbers forced to leave, the population of the Jews in the Pale is steadily increasing. Migration to the interior parts of Russia, which is allowed only to rich merchants and to skilled artisans, and is not burdened by the assistance of organized charities which give the schnorrer (beggar) an advantage over the meritorious, is contributing much to make the Jews and the Russians better acquainted, and is preparing both for friendlier intercourse under the improved conditions which are bound to come. Even now it helps to increase the number of Russianized Jews who are to be found in the front ranks of the better classes assisting in the noble work of advancing the material and mental interests of their country to the best of their abilities. The merchant and the mechanic are thus more practical than the enthusiastic student at home or abroad, who disdains the struggle for *bourgeois* or capitalistic liberal principles as being out of fashion and not sufficiently radical nowadays. The Jew, in spite of all restrictions, plays an important part in the rapid development of Russia, and when violence and malicious persecution will prove, as they have always proven, unable to suppress him, he will assume the place which belongs to him in the social structure of Russia, and which he occupies in all civilized countries. Persecution and poverty on the one hand, and mistaken benevolence on the other, may induce some Jews to become agricultural or other sorts of menial laborers. But in Russia, or out of it, the Jew, with the help of the fortitude, diligence, sobriety, and economy, which have served him through the darkest and bloodiest ages, will rise as soon as the opportunity offers itself, and will enter the middle and upper classes, to which he naturally belongs.

In conclusion, let us console ourselves with the knowledge that although the Jews of Russia suffer terribly, they do not suffer alone. All other non-Russian inhabi-

tants are subject to more or less persecution and the entire population is oppressed and plundered to an extent which an American would consider impossible to endure. The only ray of hope at present is Russia's rapid material advance. The introduction of railroads and modern methods of production are doing much to raise the standard of living, to increase the number of the well-to-do and intelligent classes, and to make the country at large more susceptible to civilizing influences from abroad. When once a higher average is reached, Russia will deserve and possess a better government than now, and with it will come better laws and better treatment alike for Jew and Gentile.

### (C) THE RUSSIAN JEW IN THE UNITED STATES <sup>1</sup>

It may not be known that the male Russian and Polish Jew can generally read his Hebrew Bible as well as a Yiddish newspaper, and that many of the Jewish arrivals at the barge office are versed in rabbinical literature, not to speak of the large number of those who can read and write Russian. When attention is directed to the Russian Jew in America, a state of affairs is found which still further removes him from the illiterate class, and gives him a place among the most ambitious and the quickest to learn both the written and the spoken language of the adopted country, and among the easiest to be assimilated with the population.

The cry raised by the Russian anti-Semites against the backwardness of the Jew in adopting the tongue and the manners of his birthplace, in the same breath in which they urge the government to close the doors of its schools to subjects of the Hebrew faith, reminds one of the hypocritical miser who kept his gate guarded by ferocious dogs, and then reproached his destitute neighbor with holding himself aloof. This country, where the schools and colleges do not discriminate between Jew and Gentile, has quite another tale to tell. The several public evening schools of the New York Ghetto, the evening school supported from the Baron de Hirsch Fund, and the private establishments of a similar character are attended by thousands of Jewish immigrants, the great majority of whom come here absolutely ignorant of the language of their native country. Surely nothing can be more inspiring to the public-spirited citizen, nothing worthier of the interest of the student of immigration, than the sight of a gray-haired tailor, a patriarch in appearance, coming, after a hard day's work at a sweat-shop, to spell "cat, mat, rat," and to grapple with the difficulties of "th" and "w." Such a spectacle may be seen in scores of the class-rooms

<sup>1</sup> This is largely an article published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1898, corrected with reference to changes since that time.



in the schools referred to. Hundreds of educated young Hebrews earn their living and often pay their way through college by giving private lessons in English in the tenement houses of the district,—a type of young men and women peculiar to the Ghetto. The pupils of these private tutors are the same poor, overworked sweat-shop “hands” of whom the public hears so much and knows so little. A tenement house kitchen turned, after a scanty supper, into a class-room, with the head of the family and his boarder bent over an English school reader, may perhaps claim attention as one of the curiosities of life in a great city; in the Jewish quarter, however, it is a common spectacle.

Nor does the tailor or peddler who hires these tutors, as a rule, content himself with an elementary knowledge of the language of his new home. I know many Jewish workmen who before they came here knew not a word of Russian, and were ignorant of any book except the Scriptures, or perhaps the Talmud, but whose range of English reading places them on a level with the average college-bred American.

The innumerable Yiddish publications with which the Jewish quarter is flooded are also a potent civilizing and Americanizing agency. The Russian Jews of New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago have within the last twenty years created a vast periodical literature which furnishes intellectual food not only to themselves but also to their brethren in Europe. A feverish literary activity unknown among the Jews in Russia, Roumania, and Austria, but which has arisen here among the immigrants from those countries, educates thousands of ignorant tailors and peddlers, lifts their intelligence, facilitates their study of English, and opens to them the doors of the English library. The five million Jews living under the Czar had not a single Yiddish daily paper even when the government allowed such publications, while their fellow countrymen and co-religionists who have taken up their abode in America publish seven dailies (six in New York and one in Chicago), not to mention the countless Yiddish weeklies and monthlies, and the pamphlets and books which to-day make New York the largest Yiddish book market in the world. If much that is contained in these publications is rather crude, they are in this respect as good — or as bad — as a certain class of English novels and periodicals from

which they partly derive their inspiration. On the other hand, their readers are sure to find in them a good deal of what would be worthy of a more cultivated language. They have among their contributors some of the best Yiddish writers in the world, men of undeniable talent, and these supply the Jewish slums with popular articles on science, on the history and institutions of the adopted country, translations from the best literatures of Europe and America, as well as original sketches, stories, and poems of decided merit. It is sometimes said (usually by those who know the Ghetto at second hand) that this unnatural development of Yiddish journalism threatens to keep the immigrant from an acquaintance with English. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Yiddish periodicals are so many preparatory schools from which the reader is sooner or later promoted to the English newspaper, just as the several Jewish theatres prepare his way to the Broadway playhouse, or as the Yiddish lecture serves him as a stepping-stone to that English-speaking, self-educational society, composed of workingmen who have lived a few years in the country, which is another characteristic feature of life in the Ghetto. Truly, the Jews "do not rot in their slum, but, rising, pull it up after them."

The only time when Jewish laborers threatened to come in serious conflict with the cause of American workingmen was during the great 'longshoremen's strike of 1882, at the very beginning of the new era in the history of Jewish immigration. Ignorant of the meaning of strikes, the newcomers blindly allowed themselves to be persuaded by representatives of ship-owners to take the places of former employees. No sooner, however, had the situation been explained to the "scabs" than they abandoned their wheelbarrows, amid the applause of the striking Gentiles. Since then the Jewish workmen have been among the most faithful members of the various trades-unions of the country. So far from depressing wages and bringing down the standard of living, the Jewish workingman has been among the foremost in the struggle for the interests of the wage-earning class of the country. If he brings with him a lower standard of living, his keen susceptibilities, his "intellectual avidity," and his "almost universal and certainly commendable desire to improve his condition" impel him to raise that standard to the level

of his new surroundings. Unlike some of the immigrants of other nationalities, the Essex Street Jew does not remain here in the same plight in which he came. Poor as he is, he strives to live like a civilized man, and the money which another workman perhaps might spend on drink and sport he devotes to the improvement of his home and the education of his children. If "it may be stated as axiomatic that home-builders are good citizens," the Jewish immigrant makes a very good citizen indeed.

I have visited the houses of many American workingmen, in New England and elsewhere, as well as the residences of their Jewish shopmates, and I have found scarcely a point of difference. The squalor of the typical tenement house of the Ghetto is far more objectionable and offensive to the people who are doomed to live in it than to those who undertake slumming expeditions as a fad, and is entirely due to the same economical conditions which are responsible for the lack of cleanliness in the homes of such poor workingmen as are classed among the most desirable contribution to the population. The houses of the poor Irish laborers who dwell on the outskirts of the great New York Ghetto (and they are not worse than the houses occupied by the poor Irish families of the West Side) are not better, in point of cleanliness, than the residences of their Jewish neighbors. The following statement, which is taken from the report made by the Tenement House Committee to the Senate and Assembly of the State of New York on January 17, 1895, throws light on the subject.

"It is evident," says the committee, "that there are other potent causes besides density of population at work to affect the death-rate of the tenement districts, and the most obvious one is race or nationality. It will be observed at once that the wards showing the greatest house density combined with a low death-rate, namely the Tenth and Seventh Wards, are very largely populated by Russian and Polish Jews. This is, in fact, the Jewish quarter of the city. On the other hand, the wards having the highest death-rate . . . constitute two of the numerous Italian colonies which are distributed through the city. . . . The greatest density (57.2 tenants to a house) is in the Tenth Ward (almost exclusively occupied by Jews), which also has the lowest death-rate. . . . The low death-rates of the Seventh and Tenth Wards are largely accounted



for by the fact previously mentioned, that they are populated largely by Russian Jews."

To be sure, life in a Tenth Ward tenement house is wretched enough, but this has nothing to do with the habits and inclinations of its inmates. It is a broad subject, one which calls in question the whole economic arrangement of our time, and of which the sweating system — the great curse of the Ghetto — is only one detail.

Is the Russian Jew responsible for the sweating system? He did not bring it with him. He found it already developed here. In its varied forms it exists in other industries as well as in the tailoring trades. But far from resigning himself to his burden the Jewish tailor is ever struggling to shake it from his shoulder. Nor are his efforts futile. In many instances the sweat-shop system has been abolished or its curse mitigated. The sweating system and its political ally, the "ward heeler," are accountable for ninety-nine per cent. of whatever vice may be found in the Ghetto, and the Jewish tailor is slowly but surely emancipating himself from both. "The redemption of the workers must be effected by the workers themselves" is the motto of the two dailies which the Jewish workingmen publish for themselves in New York. The recurring tailor strikes, whose frequency has been seized upon by the "funny men" of the daily press, are far less droll than they are represented to be. Would that the public could gain a deeper insight into these struggles than is afforded by newspaper reports! Hidden under an uncouth surface would be found a great deal of what constitutes the true poetry of modern life,—tragedy more heart-rending, examples of a heroism more touching, more noble, and more thrilling, than anything that the richest imagination of the romanticist can invent. While to the outside observer the struggles may appear a fruitless repetition of meaningless conflicts, they are, like the great labor movement of which they are a part, ever marching onward, ever advancing.

The anti-Semitic assertion that the Jew as a rule avoids productive labor, which is pure calumny so far as the Jews of Russia, Austria, and Roumania are concerned, would certainly be out of place in this country, where so many of the Jewish immigrants are among the most diligent wage-earners. As to the remainder, it includes, besides a large army of poor peddlers, thousands of such "business men" as news-dealers and rag-men, whose occupations are



scarcely less productive or more agreeable than manual labor.

Farming settlements of Jews have not been very successful in this country. There are some Jews in Connecticut, in New Jersey, and in the Western states, who derive a livelihood from agriculture, but the majority of the Jewish immigrants who took to tilling the soil in the eighties have been compelled to sell or to abandon their farms, and to join the urban population. But how many American farmers have met with a similar fate! This experience is part of the same great economic question, and it does not seem to have any direct bearing on the peculiar inclinations or disinclinations of the Hebrew race. It may not be generally known that in southern Russia there are many flourishing farms which are owned and worked by Jews, although, owing to their legal disabilities, the titles are fictitiously held by Christians.

Hundreds of Russian and Polish Jews have been more or less successful in business, and the names of several of them are to be found on the signs along Broadway.

The first educated Russian Hebrews to come to this country were attracted neither by the American colleges nor by the access of their race to a professional career. In the minds of some cultured enthusiasts, the general craze for shaking off the dust of the native land and seeking shelter under the stars and stripes crystallized in the form of a solution of the Jewish question. Of the two movements which were set on foot in 1882 by the Palestinians and the Americans, the American movement seemed the more successful. Several emigrant parties (the Eternal People, New Odessa) were sent out with a view to establishing agricultural colonies. The whole Jewish race was expected by the Americans to follow suit in joining the farming force of the United States, and numbers of Jewish students left the Russian universities and gymnasiums to enlist in the pioneer parties. All these parties broke up, some immediately upon reaching New York, others after an abortive attempt to put their plans into practice, although in several instances undertakings in the same direction have proved partially successful. The would-be pioneers were scattered through the Union, where they serve their brethren as physicians, druggists, dentists, lawyers, or teachers.

Only from three to five per cent. of the vacancies in the

Russian universities and gymnasiums are open to applicants of the Mosaic faith. As a consequence, the various university towns of Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, France, and Austria have each a colony of Russo-Jewish pilgrims of learning. The impecunious student, however, finds a university course in those countries inaccessible. Much more favorable in this respect is the United States, where students from among the Jewish immigrants find it possible to sustain themselves during their college course by some occupation; and this advantage has to some extent made this country the Mecca of that class of young men. It is not, however, always the educated young men, the graduates of Russian gymnasiums, from whom the Russian members at the American colleges are recruited. Not to speak of the hundreds of immigrant boys and girls who reach the New York City College or the Normal College by way of the grammar schools of the Ghetto, there are in the colleges of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Boston, as well as among the professional men of the Jewish colonies, not a few former peddlers or workmen who received their first lessons in the rudimentary branches of education within the walls of an American tenement house. I was once consulted by an illiterate Jewish peddler of thirty-two who was at a loss to choose between a medical college and a dry goods store. "I have saved two thousand dollars," he said. "Some friends advise me to go into the dry goods business, but I wish to be an educated man and live like one."

The Russian-speaking population is represented also in the colleges for women. There are scores of educated Russian girls in the sweat-shops, and their life is one of direst misery,—of overwork in the shop, and of privations at home.

Politically the Jewish quarter is among the most promising districts in the metropolis. The influence of the vote-buyer, which is the blight of every poor neighborhood in the city, becomes in the Ghetto smaller and smaller. There is no method of determining the number of votes which are secured for either of the two leading parties by any of the several forms of bribery enumerated by Mr. James Bryce.

If some immigrants have not the "adequate conception of the significance of our institutions," of which Vice-president Fairbanks speaks, it is the American slum poli-

tician who gives the newcomer lessons in that conception; and if it happens to be an object lesson in the form of a two-dollar bill and a drink, the political organization which depends upon such a mode of "rolling up a big vote" is certainly as much to blame as the ignorant bribe-taker.

The ward heeler is as active in the Ghetto as elsewhere. Aided by an army of "workers," which is largely made up of the lowest dregs of the neighborhood, he knocks, on election day, at the door of every tenement house apartment, while on the street the vote market goes on in open daylight as freely as it did before there was a Parkhurst to wage war against a guilty police organization. This statement is true of every destitute district, and the Jewish quarter is no exception to the rule. As was revealed by the Lexow committee, some of the leading district "bosses" in the great city, including a civil justice, owe their power to the political co-operation of criminals and women of the street. Unfortunately this is also the case with the Jewish neighborhood, where every wretch living on the profits of vice, almost without exception, is a member of some political club and an active "worker" for one of the two "machines," and where, during the campaign, every disreputable house is turned into an electioneering centre. If the Tenth Ward has come to be called "the Klondike" of the police, so much the worse for the parties who are directly responsible for the evil which justifies both that appellation and the name of "Tenderloin," which is borne by a more prosperous neighborhood than the Ghetto.

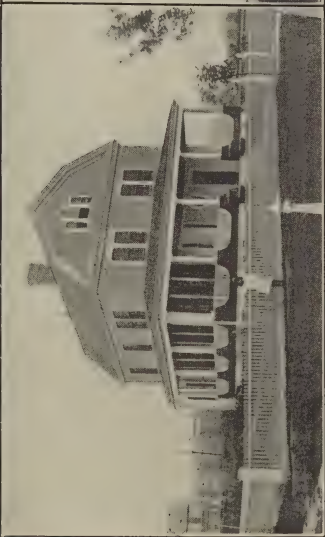
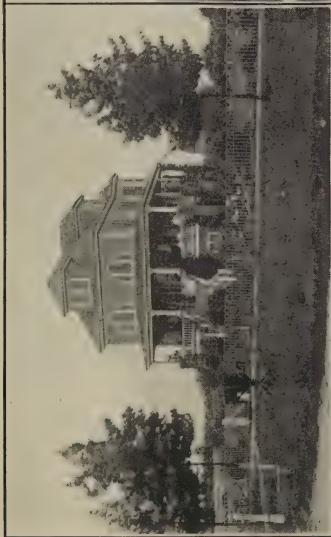
The malady is painful enough, but it is not the guilty politician from whom the remedy is to be expected. As to the Jewish quarter, the doctrine of self-help is practiced by the workingmen politically as well as economically. In proportion as the intelligence of the district is raised by the thousand and one educational agencies at work, "the many characteristics of the best citizens," the Jews of the East Side come to the front, and the power of the corruptionist wanes.

The Jewish immigrants look upon the United States as their country, and when it engaged in war they did not shirk their duty. They contributed three times their quota of volunteers to the army, and they had their representatives among the first martyrs of the campaign, two of the brave American sailors who were wounded at Car-

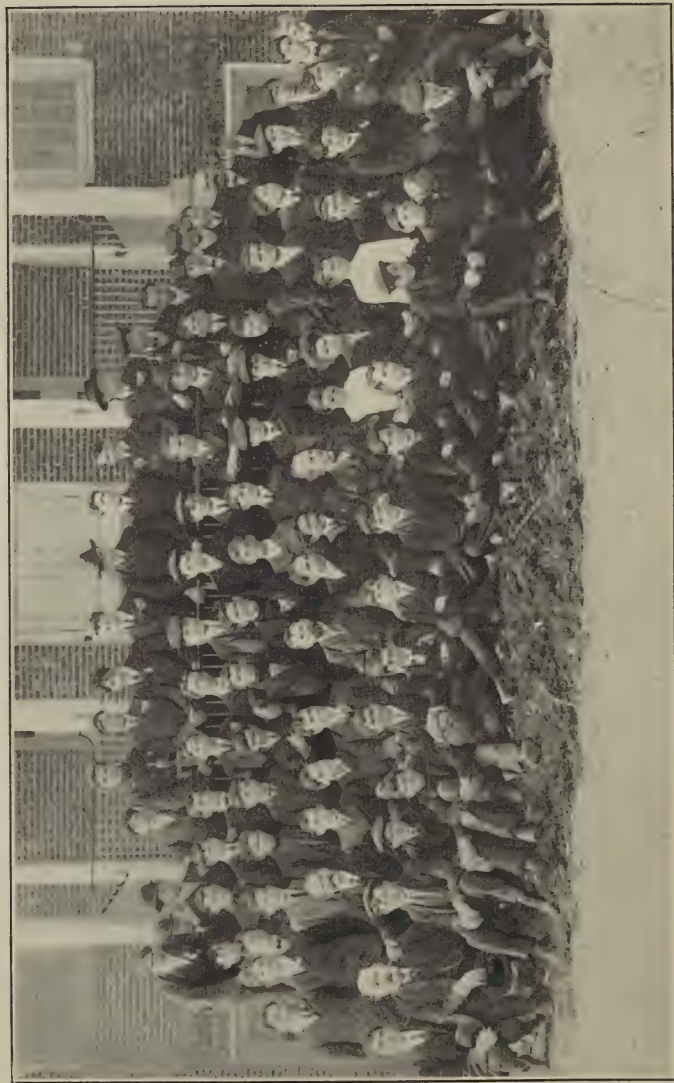
denas and Cienfuegos being the sons of Hebrew immigrants.

The Russian Jew brings with him the quaint customs of a religion full of poetry and of the sources of good citizenship. The orthodox synagogue is not merely a house of prayer; it is an intellectual centre, a mutual aid society, a fountain of self-denying altruism, and a literary club, no less than a place of worship. The study-rooms of the hundreds of synagogues, where the good old people of the Ghetto come to read and discuss "words of law" as well as the events of the day, are crowded every evening in the week with poor street peddlers, and with those gray-haired, misunderstood sweat-shop hands of whom the public hears every time a tailor strike is declared. So few are the joys which this world has to spare for those overworked, enfeebled victims of "the inferno of modern times" that their religion is to many of them the only thing which makes life worth living. In the fervor of prayer or the abandon of religious study they forget the grinding poverty of their homes. Between the walls of the synagogue, on the top floor of some ramshackle tenement house, they sing beautiful melodies, some of them composed in the caves and forests of Spain, where the wandering people worshiped the God of their fathers at the risk of their lives; and these and the sighs and sobs of the Days of Awe, the thrill that passes through the heartbroken talith-covered congregation when the shofar blows, the mirth which fills the house of God and the tenement homes upon the Rejoicing of the Law, the tearful greetings and humbled peace-makings on Atonement Eve, the mysterious light of the Chanuccah (a festival in memory of the restoration of the Temple in the time of the Maccabeans) candles, the gifts and charities of Purim (a festival commemorating the events in the time of Esther), the joys and kingly solemnities of Passover,—all these pervade the atmosphere of the Ghetto with a beauty and a charm without which the life of its older residents would often be one of unrelieved misery.





GROUP OF JEWISH COUNTRY HOMES  
*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, Woodbine, N. J.*



GRADUATES, CLASS OF 1895

*Baron De Hirsch Agricultural School, Woodbine, N. J.*

## II

# GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE POPULATION



NEW YORK—LOWER EAST SIDE



## GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE POPULATION

### (A) NEW YORK

There is no other city in the world that contains as many Jews as there are in New York. A conservative estimate, based upon the police census and the reports of the Board of Health, places the total Jewish population of Greater New York at about 600,000 persons, which is probably less than the actual number.

The Russian Jews (under which generic name all the immigrants from Russia, Roumania, Galicia, Poland and other countries of Eastern Europe since 1881, are classed) constitute by far the larger portion of this great aggregation of Israelites.

Within a few miles of New York, there are many thousands more of the chosen people, for there are large settlements of Russian Jews in Jersey City, Elizabeth, Bayonne, Newark, and a census of Jews in New Jersey would probably show a surprisingly large number in that state.

Aside from the Jews distributed more or less thickly all over the better residential sections of New York, there are several well defined districts whose population is practically wholly Jewish. The largest of these is situated on the lower east side of the Island and Borough of Manhattan, and is easily entitled to be called the Great Ghetto. The next largest is the settlement known as Brownsville, which lies in the eastern district of the Borough of Brooklyn. There is another extensive settlement of Jewish immigrants on the upper east side of the Borough of Manhattan in the vicinity of One Hundredth Street, and a fourth in the northern part of the Borough of Brooklyn, the centre of which is on Seigel, Moore, and Varet Streets. Each of the minor Ghettos has certain peculiarities due to its situation, but in any general study of conditions, the student need only turn to the Great Ghetto (of whose main features the smaller settlements are, after all, living minia-

tures) in order to get the best possible view of the life of the Russian Jew in the American metropolis.

No walls shut in this Ghetto, but once within the Jewish quarter, one is as conscious of having entered a distinct section of the city as one would be if the passage had been through massive portals, separating this portion of the lower East Side from the non-Jewish districts of New York.

If the entry into the Ghetto has been made from the Bowery by way of one of the streets that run eastwardly to the river—it may be Broome, Delancey, Rivington, or Stanton,—the attention of the observant visitor is at once engaged. On both sides of the streets, tower the gloomy, dingy tenement houses, built on their long, narrow lots—the curse of New York. The peculiar system of cutting city lots into sections one hundred feet deep by twenty-five feet wide has almost compelled the erection of buildings which are bad from every sanitary point of view. It takes two or more lots to give space enough to erect a tenement house that will give necessary light and air to the residents.

As a happy offset to the miserable apologies for habitable dwellings are the handsome and spacious schoolhouses, many of them striking object lessons left by a reform city government—still insufficient for the needs of this overcrowded quarter, although they greet the eye every few blocks.

The main Ghetto of New York embraces the Seventh, Tenth and Thirteenth Wards, as well as the southern portions of sanitary districts A and B of the Seventeenth Ward, and of sanitary districts A and C of the Eleventh Ward. This area contains about 500 acres, the average density being approximately 500 to 600 persons to the acre.

This great Jewish city is bounded on the north by Houston Street (although there are now many Russian Jews living north of this point), on the west by the Bowery, and on the east and southeast—for the shape of the Ghetto is that of a square, with its southeastern corner cut off—by the East River. Adjoining the Jewish quarter on the north lies “Little Germany,” whither its present residents moved when driven out from Grand and Canal Streets by the advent of the Russian Jews, and whence they bid fair to be driven again owing to the encroachments of the steady streams of Hebrew immigrants, who are still com-

ing in thousands from Russia and Roumania direct to New York.

Along the East River front there is still a fringe of Irish, Italian, and American-born residents, but otherwise the whole five hundred acres are practically solidly inhabited by Jews.<sup>1</sup>

East Broadway, which is the main business thoroughfare of the quarter, divides the Ghetto into two. The conditions prevailing in the more southerly portion are distinguishable from those of the more northerly half, not so much because they are better, but because those prevailing in the northern section are worse. Generally speaking, the economic status of those who live in the streets to the south of East Broadway is not so bad as that of the residents farther to the north, because merchants, manufacturers—some of them doing business on a fairly large scale—as well as their clerks and other employees, live in the southern section, while in the northern portion are the workshops and the badly built and worse kept tenements, where thousands upon thousands of workers in the under-paid needle industries are housed.

The streets in the southern portion are wider, too, than the thoroughfares further north, and there are more private houses to relieve the congestion which the tenement houses, front and rear, cause in the areas in which they are most thickly built. The tenements, too, are kept in better condition in the southern half.

It is in the narrow streets extending to the north from East Broadway, that the "sweater" works and exists. The tenement houses in this section are of two main types—the old fashioned front and rear tenement, and the modern "dumb-bell double-decker." A prominent architect of New York has said that no misfortune that has ever come to the metropolis in the way of fire, flood, or pestilence, has been so disastrous as the way that the city has been cut up into long and narrow lots, twenty-five by one hundred feet, upon a single one of which it is not possible to build a good habitation for many families.

Owing to the physical limitations of the Island of Man-

<sup>1</sup> The Federation of Churches and Christian Workers of New York, in a report upon social conditions in the Fourteenth Assembly District, which includes the section of New York between Seventh and Fourteenth Street, east of Third Avenue (the northern extension of the Bowery) shows 17 per cent. of the families in this district are Jewish. The population of the section is about 50,000 persons, of whom 20,000, or 40 per cent., are Germans.

hattan, the vastness of the population has caused the value of land to rise to enormous figures. Consequently, in order to pay the owner of property a fair return upon his investment, it has been found necessary to erect houses sheltering many families in almost all portions of the city. Even then the rents are very high. Measured by square feet of lot space there are few portions of the city where such a high rate of rent is paid as in the Great Ghetto. Take, for example, a dumb-bell double-decker of the most modern type. Such a house is built with six stories and a basement, making practically seven stories, for there are stores in the basement, the floor of which is only a few feet below the street level. There are four families to each floor, and two stores and living rooms for two families in the basement. The absurdly low rent of \$10 per month for each apartment or store would bring \$3,360 for the house for the year. This is, however, considerably less than the actual gross return from such houses, which is generally rather over ten per cent. than under ten per cent. of the cost. A lot 25 feet by 100 feet in the Jewish quarter would cost not less than \$20,000, and a similar sum, at least, would be required to erect a dumb-bell double-decker of the regulation kind. Nevertheless, in spite of these high figures, the rents charged in some of these tenements are so exorbitant that in spite of losses from non-payment of rentals, a net return of ten per cent. or more is realized upon the sums invested. Many of the worst tenements are owned by Russian Jews themselves, who live within the confines of the Ghetto.

The mode whereby they acquire title to such valuable holdings is this: A house and lot may be worth \$40,000. The "owner" can get a loan of at least \$28,000 on such a piece of property at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. or even 4 per cent. and then he puts as large a second mortgage as possible upon the property, sometimes as much as \$7,000, leaving the owner to invest only \$5,000 of his own money. Of course, the risk is entirely his, for in case of disaster he would be first to suffer. To offset this disadvantage, he sees to it that he secures as much as possible from his tenants, giving them as little as possible in return. In many cases, the "owner" will net at least \$1,000 on his house by dint of good management, or 20 per cent. on his investment.

Remark has already been made regarding the crowded



condition of streets and sidewalks in the Jewish quarter. This is the natural result of the dense population, for if the weather is at all warm, it is almost impossible for the residents to remain indoors, and there is no place to go but the street. Even in cold weather, the apartments are so small that the young people cannot receive their friends at home, and the streets, the cafés, the dance halls, or other places of amusement become the rallying point for social intercourse. Most of the streets of the quarter are paved with asphalt, which not only permits of frequent and easy cleaning, but also deadens the noises of traffic, of which more than enough, however, are left to disturb the slumbers of the Ghetto dwellers. The front steps are crowded during summer evenings, and also during the days when they happen to be on the shady side of the street, while during very hot weather in mid-summer, there are sleepers on the sidewalks, front steps, fire escapes, and roofs, as well as in the parks, on the docks and recreation piers, and in all other places where there is opportunity for a breath of air.

There are now a few open play spaces in the quarter that are a blessing to the children. In the summer time, some of the public schools throw open their yards as play grounds, and besides this, the city has opened a number of recreation piers along the water front, where sweltering humanity may breathe in the revivifying breezes that play over the East River upon the warmest days. Furthermore, the Educational Alliance has opened a roof garden for the people upon the top of the building, and there is also a garden on the roof of the Alfred Corning Clark Neighborhood House, and one on the top of the University Settlement. One would naturally draw the conclusion from the undesirable conditions that prevail here, owing to the overcrowding and defective way in which the houses are built, that the mortality would be very high. It is a remarkable fact that on the contrary, the death rate is low, as is shown in the discussion on Health and Sanitation in this volume.

This seems very favorable, but it takes no account of the great amount of sickness and the depressed or exhausted vitality of the residents, all of which are part of the tremendous arraignment against bad housing and urban overcrowding.

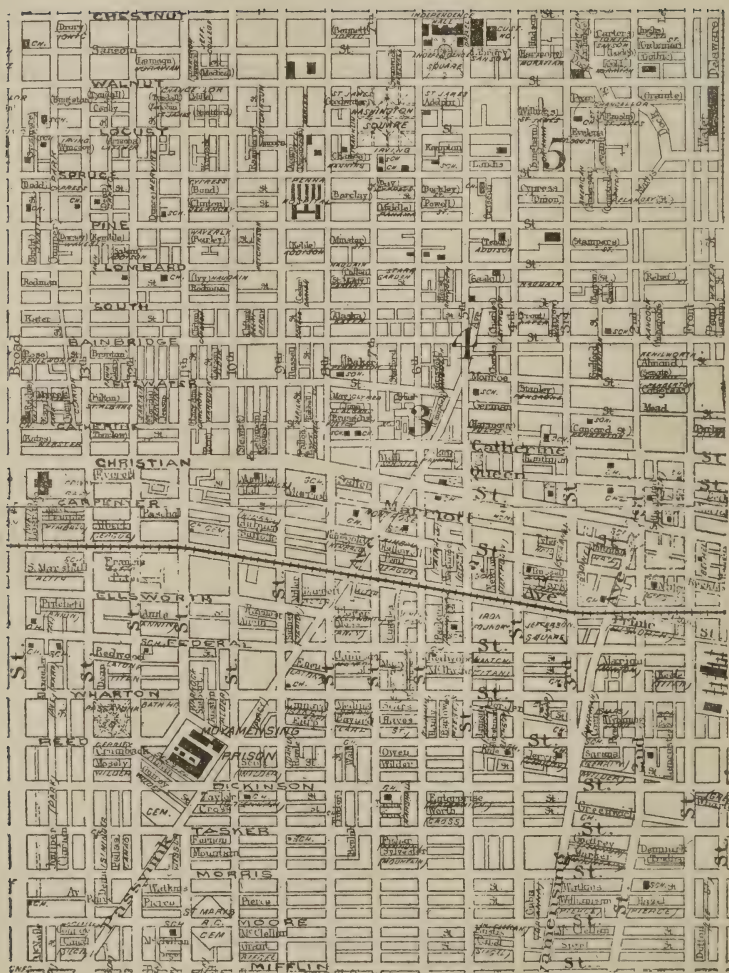
The best part of the social life of the Jewish quarter

centres, as it should, in the home. The tenement house, with its cramped quarters, does the very best it can to destroy home life. But its best is not the worst possible. For in spite of such physical limitations as the double-decker tenement house imposes, and others slightly worse, the clans—so many of them as can gather in the ten by twelve front room—always assemble to celebrate a bar mitzvah (when a Jewish boy is admitted to the faith at the age of thirteen years) or a b'rith milah (circumcision). The older people do pay visits to their brothers-in-law, or other relatives, from time to time. The members of the immediate family are close together (more or less necessarily) all the time they are at home.

But the young people! That is a wholly different story. The social life for them, alas! does not make the three-room apartment the common centre. In the first place, it is not conducive to the observance of the conveniences to have the children put to bed in the same room where Rebecca is entertaining Isaac. Yet the children must be bedded somewhere, and the other two rooms, one of which is the kitchen, are already pre-empted. Therefore, not only does Rebecca refrain from receiving Isaac in her home, but she is just as unable to entertain Esther or Sarah or Leah. Such space as exists, the children and the older members of the family occupy, and there is no place wherein the young maidens can whisper to each other their little secrets and hopes and plans, the discussion of which sweetens the hours after the toil of the day.

What is the consequence? There is the street. Crowded, too, but there is isolation in such a crowd, and the street becomes the common meeting place for man and maid. Needless to say, the ethics and etiquette of the streets are not elevating, and the degenerating effects are not hidden from the eyes of the observant. Such young people soon become inoculated with the shallow cynicism of the ignorant. The Jewish faith, as they know it, with its ceremonies and restrictions, is to them ridiculous and contemptible. "Pleasure," and not "duty," being their watch-word, all that hampers freedom or self-indulgence is a kill-joy to be avoided. Therefore, the dance hall, the vaudeville theatre, the card game, the prize fight are places of frequent resort. The synagogue, the lecture hall, the concert room, the debating club, are not visited to any extent by this particular portion of Young Israel.

There is, on the other hand, a very appreciable number of fairly well educated young people, who have left the Jewish religion of their orthodox parents. There is a wide field for work among these young people. They need a leader possessing eloquence and personal magnetism and the power of teaching by example the value of a religious life as interpreted by the teachings of Judaism in its modern form.



PHILADELPHIA—SOUTHEASTERN SECTION



## (B) PHILADELPHIA

There is something picturesque in the appearance of the streets in the southern section of the city, though it may not be necessarily attractive to the native who sees but the squalor and the dirt that are part of the picture which forms itself in the localities where the several nationalities and races are congregated. The lower portion of the city contains fairly well-defined groups,—Russian Jews, Italians, negroes, besides native Americans, Irish, Germans, and people from Slavic countries, such as Russians, Poles, Lithuanians, and Hungarians, which add to the variegated character of the assembly of nations in the city.

The district to which I shall confine myself chiefly includes the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Seventh Wards of the city of Philadelphia. The area of these six wards is 2.322 square miles, and, as the total area of the city is 129.583 square miles, the district is about one-fiftieth of the entire surface of the city. The population of these six wards is 165,385, according to the census of 1900. The population of the city is 1,293,697. We have, then, one-eighth of the people of the city in an area which is but one-fiftieth of the city. The Third Ward is the most densely populated in the city, the number of persons inhabiting it being 24,693, and as its area is but .191 square mile, this is an average of 129.282 persons to the square mile.

An inquiry into the Russian-Jewish population enables me to assume 55,000<sup>1</sup> as the number. This is deduced from

<sup>1</sup> The method of the English Educational Department to ascertain the number of children of school age is to divide the population by six. This is applied by H. Llewellyn Smith, in Booth's "Life and Labor of the People," Vol. III, p. 106. Notwithstanding the efforts of truant officers and others interested in the education of children, the actual school attendance for various reasons, never reaches the total of children of school age, but though it may approximate it more closely with Jewish children than with most other classes, in all but the higher grades, we cannot absolutely accept the multiple of six to obtain the population as other elements vary in the public school conditions between this country and Great Britain. Factors which must be considered are the greater size of the Russian Jewish families on the one hand and, on the other, the greater number of adults in the immigrant population, some of whom would not be accounted for in a calculation based merely on school attendance. However, these two factors in a measure neutralize each

the figures as to the number of Jewish children attending the public schools. The number in schools of the section bounded by Spruce Street on the north, Moore Street on the south, the Delaware River on the east, and Nineteenth Street on the west, is 11,686 out of a total of 21,515 pupils.

The negro population of these lower wards is 18,000 in round numbers, according to the United States Census statistics. The Italians are assumed to number 28,000, according to the Census. The Christians from Slav countries may number between 5,000 and 10,000. The remainder of 50,000 are Irish, German and native American.

When the Russian Jewish people first came here, as a consequence of the persecutions, they settled in dwellings in the lower section, because rents were as cheap there as anywhere. With relatives and friends coming year after year, and with natural accretions, the population grew and grew until now it has become a fair proportion of the southeastern section of the city. It has supplanted not only the German Jewish and Polish Jewish population, which was originally in this section, but it has swarmed into Pine and Spruce Streets, formerly occupied by old Philadelphia families. It has, in some cases, made the streets more respectable and less dangerous morally. It has even, in some instances, displaced Italians, just as Italians have displaced some native-born and others of foreign nationalities in sections immediately west of the Jewish portions. Some of the well-to-do Jews are in the northern portion of the section on Spruce and Pine Streets. Lombard is lower-grade, especially because of its mixture with the lower-class negroes. South Street is a bee-hive of business activity among the Jewish people. Parts of Bainbridge Street are similarly active. From Fitzwater down, for several blocks, we find a dividing line at Fifth and Sixth Streets, west of which are Italians, and east of which are Russian Jews. Below Christian the groupings are less distinct. The Jewish population has, however, gradually moved down so that some may be found as far south as Moore Street. Some

other. In our statement of more than 11,000 Jewish school children, we unquestionably have a large majority of the children between the age of three and thirteen. We must, in addition, account for all under the first and over the second, apart from those not attending school. Let us arbitrarily assume that the school children are, in a proportion, approximately one-fifth of the Jewish population of the district. This will make the total about 55,000. There are probably 15,000 Russian Jews in other sections of the city, making 70,000 out of a total of approximately 100,000 Jews.

well-to-do families have moved to Wharton Street and streets running north and south in the neighborhood. Of the north and south streets, Fourth contains the most thickly settled Jewish population. Large numbers may be found all the way from Spruce to Reed. Second and Third also contain a large Jewish population, especially between Pine and Wharton. On Fifth Street, too, it is similarly predominant as far as Washington Avenue, and on Sixth Street as far as Fitzwater. Immediately west of the northern portion of the Jewish section are numerous negroes, and southwest is the section predominantly Italian.

In the northern portion of this down-town district the Jewish people mingle with the left-overs of Americans. On Spruce Street they are with the so-called better element of the Americans. On Bainbridge Street the Italians begin to take a share. On Fitzwater Street the Italians become more emphatic in their claim for attention by virtue of their numbers. At Sixth and Fitzwater Streets the Jews and Italians may be said to battle for supremacy as to numbers. From this corner, west and south, Italians are settled in in thick numbers. The main streets they inhabit in this neighborhood are Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth, from Fitzwater Street to Washington Avenue, including Catharine, Christian and Carpenter, besides a number of smaller streets and alleys. At Fifth and Carpenter Streets the Italians again meet the Jewish people, who are preponderant east of this point. Sometimes a block is inhabited in its outer boundaries by one nationality chiefly, and in the streets within by another.

In the lower wards on the Delaware River front, besides Irish and American, there are probably at least two thousand persons from Slavic countries, chiefly Poles, but also some Hungarians and Lithuanians. These are largely in a block bounded by Lombard Street on the north, Carpenter Street on the south, the Delaware River on the east, and Third Street on the west.

The Jewish population has spread north as well as south. Along Second Street particularly has there been a movement north. For a distance of two miles there have been streams formed in a narrow line along the eastern side of the city. This is indicated, for example, by the population around Second and New Market Streets, details of whose housing and sanitary conditions are given in the study

devoted to this subject.<sup>1</sup> So, too, there are clusters around Second and Poplar Streets. There is also a settlement in Richmond in the northeastern portion of the city.

Jewish children attend the public schools in large numbers; no nationality down-town is more appreciative of the public school system. The result is most gratifying to our educational system, and to the adaptability and intellectual ability of the Jewish population. The public night schools are supplemented by private schools in the teaching of the immigrant populations. Meetings, lectures, and discussions held under the auspices of literary societies, beneficial organizations and charitable institutions of one sort or another, help fill out the intellectual life of the Jewish people.

The intellectual ferment among the Russian Jewish population finds no counterpart among the other nationalities. The educational activities initiated or responded to by them are much less prominent.

A valuable element of the religious life of the orthodox portion of the Jewish community is the synagogue. Some of the congregations worship in halls or rooms, others in buildings of their own.<sup>2</sup> To the list of orthodox Jewish congregations should be added the Congregation Israel, at Fifth and Pine Streets, started from without and intended for the less orthodox young people with a service in Hebrew and English, and an English sermon.

From the religious to the social life is not so far a cry

<sup>1</sup> There were 1,294 persons in the district investigated, of which 606, nearly half, were Jews. The total number of families was 239, of which 100 were Jewish. The total number of houses inspected was 179, in 73 of which the occupants were predominantly Jewish.

<sup>2</sup> The location of congregations is an index of the localities inhabited by the population. Starting with the most northern among the down-town congregations they may be enumerated as follows:

Beth Israel, 417 Pine Street.

B'nai Zion, 532 Pine Street.

Tiferes Israel Anshe Zitomir, 620 Addison Street.

B'nai Jacob, Fifth Street, above Lombard.

Kesher Israel, 421 Lombard Street.

B'nai Abraham Anshe Russia, 521 Lombard Street.

Ahavas Achim, 514 S. Third Street.

Shomre Shaboth, 518 S. Third Street.

Emunath Israel Oheb Sholem, S. E. Cor. Fifth and Gaskill Streets.

B'nai Reuben, Sixth and Kater Streets.

Ahavas Chesed Anshe Shavel, 322 Bainbridge Street.

B'nai Joseph, 525 Bainbridge Street.

Ahavas Achim Anshe Nazin, 754 S. Third Street.

Gomel Chesed Shel Emes, 314 Catharine Street.

Ahawas Zion, 815 S. Fourth Street.

Independent Chevra Kadisho, 408 Christian Street.

B'nai Israel, 922 S. Fourth Street.

Poel Zodak Securus Israel, 1021 S. Fifth Street.

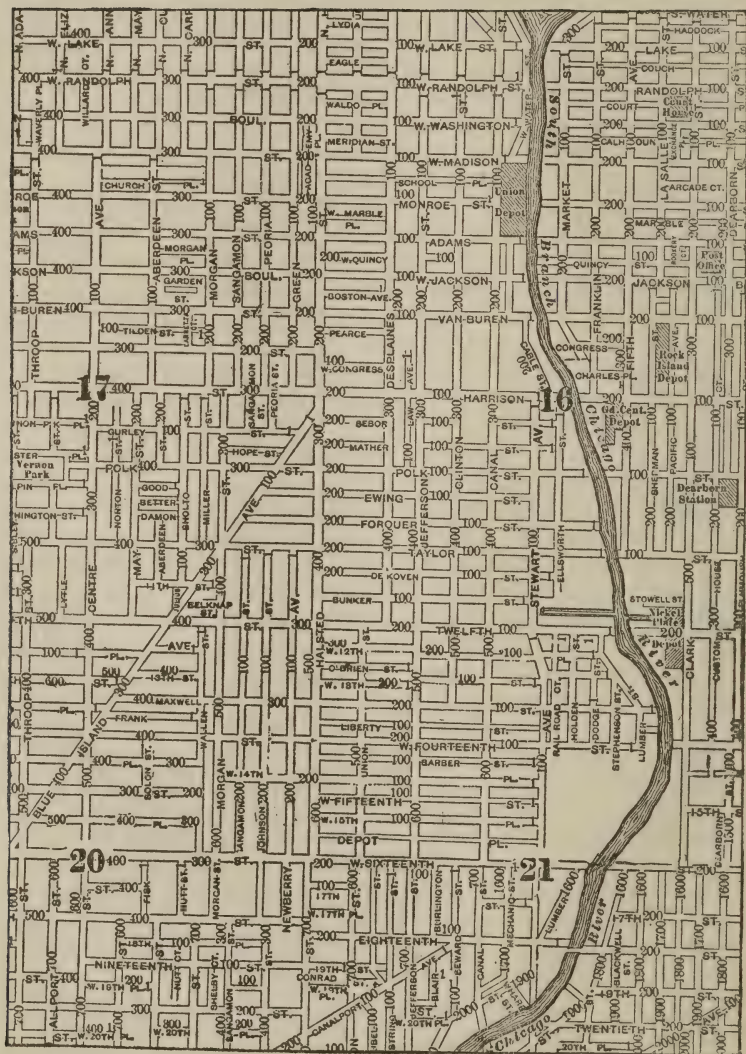


as may be thought, for with the older people the synagogue is the social centre, and many social celebrations still occur in connection with holidays and ceremonies. Social functions of a public character are balls, Russian tea parties, small dances, and musical entertainments given by one or another of the societies.

Whatever cases of charity among the Jewish people are not taken care of by any organization, are referred to the United Hebrew Charities. When the immigrant first arrives here, if he needs immediate aid or advice, the agent of the Association of Jewish Immigrants directs him. The Sheltering Home, a Russian Jewish institution, may keep him for a few days. Then the employment bureau of the Hebrew Charities, or the Baron de Hirsch Fund is brought into play, and he is found work. Later, he, or his family, may require the services of the hospital, the orphan asylum, or the burial society. All are provided for. It is still true that Jews do not become public charges as the result of dependency.

There is probably no nationality less prone to serious crime than the Jewish. It is true, we see evidences of juvenile delinquency among the immigrant portion of this nationality, and the problem with reference to this is grave, but as the conditions which have permitted it to develop are to a considerable extent due to the city environment of the children, to bad housing and street influences, to the absence of sufficient play space, one remedy lies along the lines of improving these conditions, which, with the greater adaptability of the parents and the people of the neighborhoods, as they continue here, will modify the evils.

The Russian Jewish population is, then, a very important element of the southern section of the city in point of numbers. Its social and economic relations need not be further considered in this place. There can be little question of its activity and progress along various lines, not only as compared with other nationalities, in the lower section of the city, but with the population generally.



CHICAGO—WEST SIDE

## (C) CHICAGO

“Two families,” writes Prof. Zueblin in an article on “The Chicago Ghetto,”<sup>1</sup> “constituted the Jewish population of Chicago in 1843,” when the first refugees from the German persecution found their way to Illinois. In 1848 a society was chartered under the name Kehillath Anshé Maariv (Congregation of the Men of the West). In 1849 a synagogue was erected on Clark Street between Quincy and Jackson. Thus were laid the foundations of German Jewry, and, a little later, of German reform Jewry of Chicago. Russian and orthodox Jewry of Chicago has a later origin and perhaps a more dramatic history.

The few who came before the eighties were unquestionably the lighter element of the Russian Jewish communities—the chaff, so to speak, driven by the playful winds of adventure and gain. These early Russian Jewish settlers were actuated not so much by the conditions which they left behind as by the prospective chances of the new land. They resembled more the stray adventurers of a newly discovered gold field than an organic group of early settlers bound together by strong communal interests.

It is only when the storm of the so-called “May Regulations” of 1882 (and again of 1892) broke upon the Russian Jewish communities with the vehemence and force of a hurricane that solid parts of these communities were moved and carried off to American shores. These masses brought with them not merely a dominating desire for personal welfare, but also strong social ties. It was these natural pre-existing relations which made social life and the organization of congenial groups possible.

Recent additions to Chicago Jewry come from Roumania and Bessarabian parts of Russia. The fact of extreme importance from the American point of view in connection with these earlier and later tides of immigration is that they all originate in persecution. They have

<sup>1</sup> *Hull House Maps and Papers*, p. 91.

been unable to get along not because of shiftlessness or economic reverses due directly to themselves, but because of the action of the government.

The present size of Chicago Jewry, including all elements, Portuguese, German, Russian, and Roumanian, is variously estimated. The best judges, however, agree on 60,000 as being the fairest approximation. These are distributed over the whole city area forming colonies at each of the four corners—a fact worthy of note in a consideration of the Chicago Ghetto, which to the minds of some people still suggests an iron-barred fence encircling a limited area wherein all Jews dwell.

Chicago Jewry is scattered all over the South Side as far as Sixty-third Street, on the East and North-East Side up to the Lake, the North-West Side, where it numbers nearly 15,000, and finally the West Side where there are at least 30,000 Jews, mostly Russian and Polish.

A more exact idea of the location of the various Jewish centres in Chicago may be had by designating the places of our foremost synagogues: The Sinai Temple on Twentieth Street and Indiana Avenue; the Temple Kehillath Anshé Maariv on Thirty-third Street and Indiana Avenue and many others on the South Side; the Temple of the North Side; Hebrew Congregation, on La Salle Avenue and Goethe Street on the North Side; the synagogue of Anshé Keneseth Israel on Clinton and Judd Streets, and a host of others on the West Side.

It is the West Side of Chicago that is commonly called the Chicago Ghetto. In fact the city is supposed to have two Ghettos, a lesser and a greater. The lesser “is found in the Seventh Ward bounded by Twelfth, Halsted, Fifteenth Streets and Steward Avenue, where ninety per cent. of the population are Jews. The greater Ghetto, including an area of about a square mile, comprises parts of the Nineteenth, Seventh and Eighth Wards, and is bounded by Polk Street on the North, Blue Island Avenue on the west, Fifteenth Street on the south, and Steward Avenue on the east.” Roughly speaking, this is almost co-extensive with the “slum district” as defined in the Seventh Special Report of the Commissioner of Labor on the Slums of Great Cities. It is this Ghetto, then, in the slum of a great city, which is the home of the great majority of Chicago Jews. How it looks to the “outsider” may best



be judged from the following description of Prof. Zueblin:<sup>1</sup>

“ The physical characteristics of the Ghetto do not differ materially from the surrounding districts. The streets may be a trifle narrower; the alleys are no filthier. There is only one saloon to ten in the other districts, but the screens, side doors, and loafers are of the ubiquitous type; the theatre bills a higher grade of performance than other cheap theatres, but checks are given between the acts, whose users find their way to the bar beneath. The dry goods stores have the same ‘ cheap and nasty ’ goods within which may be found elsewhere. The race differences are subtle; they are not too apparent to the casual observer. It is the religious distinction which every one notices, the synagogues, the Talmud schools, the ‘ kosher ’ signs on the meat markets. Among the dwelling-houses of the Ghetto are found the three types which curse the Chicago workingman,— the small low, one or two story, “ pioneer ” wooden shanty, erected probably before the street was graded, and hence several feet below the street level; the brick tenement of three or four stories, with insufficient light, bad drainage, no bath, built to obtain the highest possible rent for the smallest possible cubic space; and the third type, the deadly rear tenement with no light in front, and with the frightful odors of the dirty alley in the rear, too often the workshop of the ‘ sweater ’ as well as the home of an excessive population. On the narrow pavement of the narrow street in front is found the omnipresent garbage-box, with full measure, pressed down and running over. In all but the severest weather, the streets swarm with children day and night. On bright days, groups of adults join the multitude, especially on Saturday and Sunday, or on Jewish holidays. A morning walk impresses one with the density of the population, but an evening visit reveals a hive.”

One thing which excites the wonder of the investigator is the vitality of the Jew in spite of his living under the double curse of slum and Ghetto. The Seventh contains the largest Jewish population and the lowest death rate.<sup>2</sup> The same remarkable vitality as is shown by the low death-rate in the ward containing a large Jewish population is observed in other Jewish centres, and this vitality, let it be

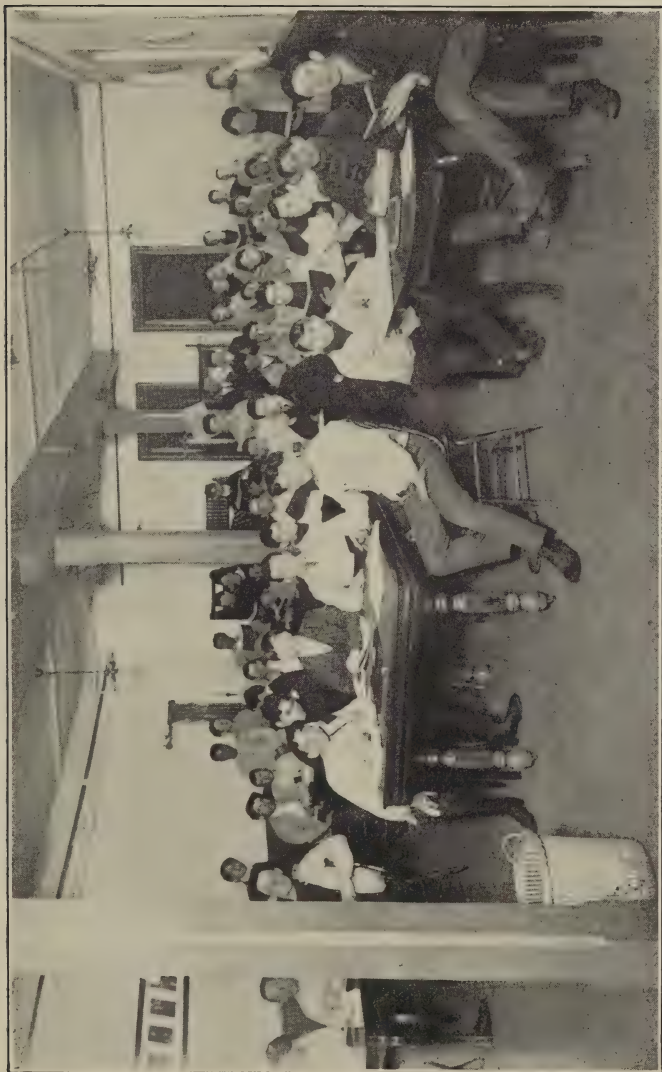
<sup>1</sup> *Hull House Maps and Papers*, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

remembered, is not only "purely physical." Hand in hand with the energy of the body goes an energy of mind which is equally challenging,—as a description of the various forms of industrial and social activities plainly shows.

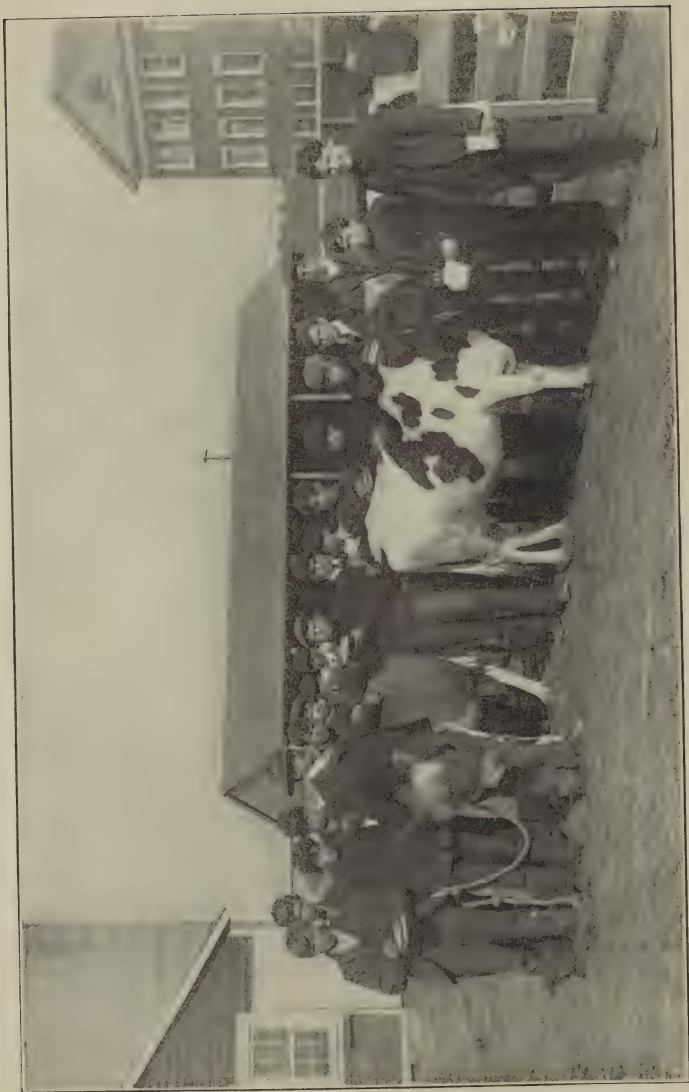
Traditionally the Jew is a tradesman. But in this country, at least, the Jew's range of industrial activities has been wonderfully extended. There are not only merchants and manufacturers, not only the familiar tailors and cigar makers, but great and ever growing numbers of brick layers, carpenters, painters, decorators, and machinists, and, in some instances, thoroughly trained engineers, graduates of prominent technical schools. The Lewis Institute and Armour Institute have helped not a little in opening up these particular avenues of useful knowledge to the Jewish youth. But the institution which is especially responsible for a high standard of industrial education is the Jewish Training School, situated in the very heart of the Ghetto.

The number of clubs of a more social character indicate a welcome departure from the old mode of self-centred living among the Jews. Of all the Jewish clubs of Chicago to-day, the Standard is the oldest, most prominent and most influential. It was organized in 1869. The Lakeside is next in prestige, and is but fifteen years younger. These and the Unity Club are all situated on the South Side. The West Side also has a number of very fine old club rooms, as the West Chicago Club, the Lessing Club House, the Lasalle Club. The last two are especially responsible for the educational leaven on the West Side. Other educational agencies are Hull House, the evening schools, the Jewish press, the Jewish theatres, and the like. The intense intellectual life which the Jew leads in the midst of all these institutions is only further proof of his enormous vitality. The true explanation of this vitality may now be suggested: Is it not likely that the Jew possesses qualities which are too fine for the slum and Ghetto soil in which they are planted, the result being a redoubling of energy to overcome a particularly nasty environment? That he has not succumbed to the distressing environment is still a cause for wonder.



IN THE STUDY ROOM

*Baron De Hirsch Agricultural School, Woodbine, N. J.*



A LECTURE ON THE COW

*Baron De Hirsch Agricultural School, Woodbine, N. J.*



III

PHILANTHROPY

## PHILANTHROPY

### (4) NEW YORK

On April 26, 1655, the board of directors of the Dutch West India Company wrote to Governor Stuyvesant as follows: "After many consultations, we have decided and resolved upon a certain petition made by said Portuguese Jews, that they shall have permission to sell and to trade in New Netherland and to live and remain there, provided *the poor among them shall not become a burden to the company, or to the community, but be supported by their own nation.*"

The records of the Department of Charities of the city of New York now show that (of a Jewish population approximating 700,000 in Greater New York) in the almshouse on Blackwell's Island there are twenty-six pauper Jews, of whom the majority were blind, idiotic or possessed of some peculiar defect which prevented admission to existing Jewish charitable institutions.

What is true of New York Jews is true of their co-religionists everywhere. The Jew has always cared for his own poor.

In our modern day, under more favorable conditions and auspices, the Jew has, to some extent, reverted to the non-sectarian idea in his philanthropies. Hospitals, as a rule, supported and endowed by Jews, throw open their doors to sufferers irrespective of creed, color or nationality. Other instances could be cited of charities, not medical, organized along similar lines. Jewish agencies, giving material relief, or to use a better term, those which care for the needy in their own homes, in the main confine their work to beneficiaries of their faith, without, however, making any rigid distinction. On the other hand, the trend of Jewish charity has been in the direction of caring for the Jewish poor, solely through Jewish agencies, and without the intervention or co-operation of other sectarian or non-sectarian societies or institutions. Such a condition

of affairs is the resultant of the compulsion of the centuries. The task which was at one time assumed of necessity has to-day become a proud duty. What in Stuyvesant's day was obligatory and mandatory is to-day accepted as a voluntary responsibility.

If the impoverished Jew requires the interference of his wealthier co-religionist, it is because the latter is better able to understand his needs and has a peculiar, specialized knowledge of a peculiar class of individuals. Were it possible for public charities or for non-sectarian private charities to grasp the fundamentals of Jewish poverty, to obtain that keen insight into the modes of living and thought of a heterogeneous people whose common meeting-point is their religion, an insight so necessary to bring the proper forms of relief into play, there is no reason why the poor Jew should not be the recipient of the charitable impulse of the entire community. The Jew's religion *per se* is not a factor in the solution of his physical needs. It is characteristic of his history that the greater his poverty and distress, the greater has been his religiosity and his steadfastness to his ethical and religious convictions.

The problem of the Jewish charitable societies of the United States to-day is the problem of the care of the immigrant. As such, it passes beyond merely local lines. In some of its manifestations it is national in character and in a few it has an international significance. The fact that the large bulk of the needy Jews in the United States reside in New York is accidental, and concerns the Jews of Denver and San Francisco equally with those of the Eastern seaboard cities. In so far the problem is a national one. Moreover, to deal intelligently with the question requires a knowledge of the immigrant's antecedents, the impelling motive which brought him to the United States, and an acquaintance with his previous environment. And here the international phase of the question comes in.

Roughly speaking, it may be said that there are no American-born Jewish poor. Of the 10,334 families who applied for assistance to the United Hebrew Charities of New York during its last fiscal year, 2 per cent. were born in the United States. And of these the majority of heads of families were of the first generation. Jewish dependents who have an ancestry in the United States of more than two generations are practically unknown. Nor can it be stated that there have ever been enough native-born de-

pendent Jews to make an issue, since the Stuyvesant episode. In the report of the president of the above society for the year 1881, the statement is made that during no time since the formation of the society had there been less want than during the first six months of the fiscal year just ended. It must have been gratifying for those present at the meeting to learn that after all the poor in the city had been given adequate relief, there was still in the society's treasury a comfortable balance of over \$14,000. During the following year, so large were the receipts of the society and so small the demands of the regular recipients, that the balance in the treasury at the end of the year had swelled to nearly \$19,000.

In the year 1881 began that great wave of emigration from eastern Europe, the end of which is not yet. Driven by a relentless persecution, which endangered not only their homes but frequently their lives, thousands of Jews were compelled to flee and to seek new residence on these shores. The Russo-Jewish committee which originally undertook the work of caring for these immigrants turned it over very shortly to the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society, which came into existence in December, 1881. In one year this society spent \$250,000, \$50,000 less than had been spent by the United Hebrew Charities of New York in the seven years of its existence. In the first and only annual report of the Emigrant Aid Society, its president outlined as tersely as possible the efforts that had been made to provide homes and occupations for the thousands of fleeing exiles who reached these shores during the momentous summer of 1882. In the month of July the committee spent for board and lodging alone over \$11,700. Of the herculean efforts of the members of the committee, of the sacrifices of time and money, the report in its modesty makes but scant mention. The full history of the Emigrant Aid Society is yet to be written.

With the gradual falling off in immigration, the Emigrant Aid Society went out of existence, and the care of the needy emigrants who remained in New York and who became impoverished after residence, reverted to the United Hebrew Charities. In 1885 immigration again began to grow heavier and continued in such numbers that in the following five years over 120,000 immigrants arrived at Castle Garden. In 1890 the immigration reached the fig-



ures 32,321, the largest number ever recorded up to that time.

With all that had been done, the real work of the charities was but to begin. In 1891 the religious persecution of the Russian Jews reached a climax. In the year ending September 30, 62,574 immigrants arrived at New York, of whom nearly 40,000 arrived between June and September. The entire charitable effort of the New York Jewish community was for the time directed out of the ordinary channels and applied to the monumental question of caring for the arriving Russian Jews. The Baron de Hirsch Fund, instead of utilizing its income for its educational work, appropriated over \$67,000 to the United Hebrew Charities to assist in the work of the immigration bureau. Over \$175,000 was spent by the society during this year. In September of 1891 it became apparent that there would be no cessation to the immigration and that much larger funds would be necessary to give anything like adequate assistance to the unfortunates who were arriving at the rate of 2,000 per week. The enthusiasm which was aroused at a banquet tendered to the late Jesse Seligman was utilized in establishing the "Russian Transportation Fund," which added over \$90,000 to the revenues of the United Hebrew Charities and which was given by citizens of New York, irrespective of creed. Later in the year, a standing committee of the society, known as the Central Russian Refugees Committee, was organized and was made up of representatives of the Baron de Hirsch Fund, the Russian Transportation Fund, the United Hebrew Charities, and the American Committee for Ameliorating the Condition of the Russian Exiles. The last committee was organized to secure the co-operation of relief societies in other cities, in order that the various European societies who were assisting the persecuted Russians to emigrate should thoroughly understand the attitude of the New York organization.

The year, October, 1891, to September, 1892, will ever be a memorable one in the history of Russian emigration and of Jewish philanthropy; 52,134 immigrants arrived at the Barge office during that period. The treasurer of the United Hebrew Charities paid out the enormous sum of \$321,311.05, of which \$145,200 was spent by the Russian Refugees Committee between February and September. Like the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society, the history of the

Central Russian Refugees Committee is still to be written. At present it is included in the bald statement of a treasurer's report. Should it ever be published, it will tell a tale of devotion, of altruistic effort, of sacrifice, of noble charitable impulse unparalleled in the history of American Judaism.

Since the year 1881, fully 750,000 Jewish immigrants have arrived at the port of New York alone. Of these the bulk comprise refugees from Russian and Roumanian persecution, Austrians, and Galicians. They came from countries in which many of them lived under conditions of appalling poverty. The records of the immigration bureau show that in material wealth, these immigrants are below the average of immigrants from other European countries. Due to their previous condition, a percentage is illiterate. On the other hand, the number of skilled artisans and craftsmen is so large as to be distinctly noticeable. From the standpoint of dependency, it will be of interest to study to what extent this large body of immigrants has added to the dependent and delinquent classes of the communities in the United States. The only figures that are at hand are those of New York, which are higher than would be found in other cities and towns for reasons that are obvious.

In December, 1899, the writer made a study of 1,000 families who had originally applied to the United Hebrew Charities for assistance in October, 1894. Of these 1,000 applicants it was found that 602 had not applied for assistance after December, 1894. Of the remainder, 67 families were dependent on the society to a greater or lesser extent in January, 1899. More detailed investigation disclosed the fact that nearly all of these 67 applicants were made up of families where the wage-earner had died, leaving a widow with small children, or of respectable aged and infirm couples unable to be fully self-supporting, or of families in which the wage-earner had become incapacitated through illness. In other words, after five years over 93 per cent. of the cases studied were independent of charitable interference. In October, 1904, it was found that only 23 of the 1,000 families above mentioned were applying to the society for assistance.

While the above study was limited in its scope, and while the deduction which can be drawn from it must be accepted with reserve, it is nevertheless typical of Jewish

charitable conditions. The marked feature in the care of the Jewish poor in the United States is the almost entire absence of the so-called pauper element. Even the twenty-three families above mentioned cannot be included in this category. Widowhood is the resultant of purely natural conditions, and when it afflicts the poor mother with a family, it frequently produces a condition of dependence which has in it no characteristics of demoralization. The brightest and most hopeful chapter in the history of Jewish charity is the avidity and eagerness with which its beneficiaries, bereft of the main wage-earner, become self-supporting and independent as soon as the children are old enough to contribute to the family income.

If there is one cause more than another leading up to this condition, it is the absence of the drink evil among Jews. The instances in which drunkenness lies at the bottom of Jewish dependency are so infrequent that they may be ignored. The matron of the police station in Brownsville, an outlying district of Brooklyn, recently stated that in her 12 years' experience, she could not recall a single instance of a Jewish woman having been arrested for drunkenness. Combined with the absence of this vice, there are other virtues engrafted on the Jew for centuries, all of which tend to the preservation of his self-respect and his self-esteem. Among these are the love of home, the inherent desire to preserve the purity of the family, and the remarkable eagerness which he shows for education and self-improvement. Poverty with the Jew does not spell degeneracy. The history of the Jewish charities in the United States demonstrates nothing more forcibly than that the Jewish immigrant, be he German, Russian, Roumanian, or Galician, readily adapts himself to his American environment, easily assimilates the customs and language of his adopted country, and even though he may temporarily require assistance, rapidly becomes independent of charitable interference. The immigrant Jew is frequently poverty-stricken; he is rarely a pauper, in the sense in which the word is most commonly used. He is not found in the besotted, degenerate, hopeless mass of humanity constituting the flotsam and jetsam of society, the product of generations of vice, crime, and debauchery, which makes up the scum of our present civilization. Given the opportunity and the proper surroundings, the immigrant Jew will become a good addition to the body politic, not a menace.



The work of the United Hebrew Charities of New York is typical of similar Jewish organizations throughout the United States. Its report for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1904, shows that 10,334 individuals and families applied for assistance. Of these 5,525 had applied for the first time. The society grants relief in kind, including groceries, clothing, shoes, furniture, etc. There were distributed last year 57,535 garments and pieces of furniture. The annual disbursements for material relief alone amount to over \$175,000. Ever since its organization thirty years ago, the society has endeavored to uphold the principles of organized charity. In some instances it has antedated the charity organization societies themselves. We need but mention the giving of relief in amounts adequate to make the recipient independent of further intervention on the part of the relief-giving agency, and the establishment of a graded, carefully regulated and supervised system of pensions covering if necessary a long period of years. As a rule, these pensions are given only to families where the wage-earner has died, and where, unless such provision were made, no recourse would be left, except the breaking up of the family and the commitment of the children to orphanages and similar institutions. To obviate the necessity of such commitment, the United Hebrew Charities disburses annually over \$41,000 in pensions. In the history of the society there is no form of relief which shows such good returns for the investment made. Jewish families so supported do not become pauperized; the subsidy which is granted enables the surviving parent to devote her time to the proper rearing of her children so that they may become useful and intelligent citizens.

A word may be said here on the question of adequate relief. In the revulsion which accompanied the indiscriminate almsgiving of earlier decades, the so-called organized charities which resulted therefrom frequently went to the other extreme and withheld material relief in the fear of its baneful effect on the recipient. Nothing is more characteristic of our present-day charities than the gradual return to the sound doctrine that material relief is not the end desired, but merely a means to the end, and that it must be used, if necessary, equally with other forms of relief, and must be given adequately if at all. Jewish charity has always upheld this belief.

Of all the problems which confront the average charity



organization, possibly the most perplexing is the one of the family in which the mother must be the wage-earner. The kindergarten and the day nursery have by no means solved the problem. They are at best but makeshifts in an attempt to help a situation which has its root in economic and industrial conditions. Again, the factory removes the mother from her sphere of influence over her children, and opens opportunity for the growth of incorrigibility and waywardness on the part of the latter. In the hope of partially overcoming this difficulty, the United Hebrew Charities has for some years conducted a work-room for unskilled women in which the latter are taught various needle industries, that they may eventually be sufficiently accomplished to work in their own homes, and in this fashion supplement the family income. The amount of such work that can be found is limited. More and more, daily, the factory is competing with home industry to the exclusion of the latter. A study has shown that work could be obtained for women to do at home in industries such as silk-belt making, men's and women's neckwear, garters and hose supporters, paper boxes, slip covers for the furniture trade, over-gaiters and leggings, dressing sacques, hats and caps, flowers and feathers, beaded purses and other bead-work, dress shields, incandescent light mantles, embroidery and art embroidery, passementerie work, bibs, knit goods, etc.

The sisterhoods in various districts co-operate with the United Hebrew Charities. They give material relief, have developed day nurseries, kindergartens, clubs and classes of various kinds, employment bureaus, mothers' meetings, and in fact have become social centres for the poor of their neighborhoods. Since a large percentage of the distress which is met with is occasioned by illness, medical relief of all kinds has been organized. Each district as a rule has its physician and its nurse, and where these are not at hand, co-operation has been effected with other organizations specially equipped for such work. A very recent development has been the inauguration of district or branch offices of the United Hebrew Charities located on the East Side of New York in the very heart of the congested centres. In itself the district office is no novelty. The value, however, of the new plan is due to the fact that the Boards of Directors of these district organizations are made up entirely of residents of the neighborhood and

represent the descendants of or the original immigrants who have come from Russia, Roumania, or Galicia since 1881. The value of such co-operation cannot be overestimated. The knowledge possessed by intelligent men and women who are thoroughly in touch with the traditions, customs and ambitions of the immigrants who have been coming here and who still are coming is much more desirable in determining the right kind of assistance to be given than information obtained where there is lack of such knowledge.

In very recent years, the spread of tuberculosis among Jews has merited the earnest attention of the society, and among its other activities it has been a pioneer in developing a systematic plan for caring for such tuberculosis applicants in their own homes, for whom no provision could be made in existing sanatoria. The campaign thus begun has been not only charitable, but social. Not only have these unfortunates been given food, nourishment and medical care to aid them towards recovery, but in addition thereto, instruction has been given them in the rudiments of sanitation, and in the prevention of infection. It is significant that the work of the United Hebrew Charities in this field has been followed to some extent by the recently organized Committee on Tuberculosis of the Charity Organization Society.

The name "United Hebrew Charities" as applied to the New York organization is somewhat of a misnomer, since it does not include all Jewish charitable agencies in the city of New York. It would be more proper to speak of it as the consolidation of all the purely relief societies which existed in New York prior to 1874. Aside from these, there are to-day hospitals, orphanages, technical schools for boys and girls, trade schools, day nurseries and kindergartens, guilds for crippled children, burial societies, loan societies, societies for maternity relief, and a goodly number of smaller organizations which have been founded by the immigrants of the last twenty years. It is estimated that there are over one thousand Jewish organizations and societies in the city of New York to-day, whose activities to a greater or lesser extent are directed along philanthropic lines. Practically all of the larger organizations, such as the hospitals, work in co-operation with the United Hebrew Charities.

It is an old but true saying that the "Poor help the

poor." Nowhere is this more forcibly illustrated than in the New York Ghetto. It is a truth almost axiomatic among charity workers that the poor man uses the larger charitable institutions at his command only after he has exhausted the kindness and generosity of his neighbors. For this reason, it is difficult to approximate the amount of philanthropic effort that the more prosperous Russian Jew is making for his less fortunate brethren. Of the Jewish congregations at present in New York City the majority are chevras (societies) of Russian origin which bury the dead and, where possible, give other forms of relief. Besides these, there are a number of benefit societies and benevolent societies which endeavor to assist their members in need. Three societies, however, require more extended mention owing to the character of work which they are doing. These are the Gemilath Chassodim Society, the Beth Israel Hospital, and the Chessed Shel Emeth.

The Gemilath Chassodim has been in existence since 1892. Its object is to loan money without interest in sums from \$5 to \$50 to be paid off in weekly installments to any deserving individual who can find a sponsor, or in other words, who can find a responsible endorser for his note. When the society was organized it had a net capital of eighty dollars. The society has now a capital of \$74,184.32, according to its twelfth annual report ending December 31, 1903, and turned over its capital over four times during the year, loaning \$320,740 to 13,143 persons. Of the total amount loaned, ninety-seven per cent. was repaid by the borrowers. The value of such a society in the direction of preventive charity can hardly be estimated. In the language of one of the speakers at an annual meeting, the Gemilath Chassodim may be likened to a dispensary and the United Hebrew Charities to a hospital. In the former, mild cases not yet requiring heroic surgical or medical interference may receive attention. Here, however, the simile ends. The dispensary is intended essentially for the poor man who has no other means of receiving medical assistance. The Free Loan Association, by the requirements of its constitution, bars the worthy poor man who cannot find endorsers and compels him to apply to the United Hebrew Charities for the relief which he needs.

The Beth Israel Hospital Association was incorporated in 1890 and at present has thirty beds, all of which are free. The hospital itself is situated on Jefferson Street,



in the heart of the congested district. It occupies an old mansion which has been remodeled as far as possible to meet the demands of the hospital. So progressive have the officers been that the corner-stone of a new hospital, to cost in the neighborhood of \$200,000, has been laid. This institution indicates very strongly the rapid strides that are being made by Russian Jews to provide their poor with proper facilities for relief. The Beth Israel Hospital was organized by the Russian Jewish community and has practically been sustained by it.

The Agudath Achim Chessed Shel Emeth has been in existence for sixteen years. It maintains at present two cemeteries, and is prepared to give free burial whenever the family of the deceased are not in a position to pay therefor. It has buried over twelve thousand persons.

It is not within the province of this paper to discuss in detail the various Jewish charitable institutions which New York possesses. Such organizations as the Mount Sinai Hospital, the Home for the Aged, the orphan asylums, and the various institutions under the De Hirsch foundations, are too well known to require comment here. Nor do they differ in the main from institutions of a similar kind that exist in other large centres. There are at present in the city of New York, exclusive of congregations and the organizations mentioned above, at least seventy-five societies which cater to the needs of the dependent poor and which can be classed as philanthropic agencies. Among these organizations must be included day nurseries, kindergartens, employment bureaus, fresh air charities, hospitals, dispensaries, etc., of which only general mention can be made.

The agitation in regard to tenement-house legislation in New York is still too fresh in the minds of students of this subject to require much further mention here. It will be remarked, however, that in the campaign which was made to preserve the vital features of the present tenement-house law, the Jewish residents on the East Side of New York were a unit in demanding that no drastic changes in the law be made. Similarly at a recent municipal election, it was the citizens and voters of this same district who rose *en masse* and in a campaign that was startling in its uniqueness and originality, purged their neighborhood of the vices and immorality which existed there. And this brings us to the point at issue.



The danger to morals which lies in overcrowding is due primarily to the inability to carry on a natural home life. The unit of society after all is the family, and the preservation of the latter means the preservation of the social fabric. It is not difficult to understand how a people, who through the ages have been heralded as the champions of purity in the home, have through the conditions under which they live, taken on some of the attributes of their surroundings and absorbed some of the deteriorating effects of their environment. The natural concomitants of overcrowding are disease and vice and crime. The Jew's power of assimilation is proverbial. It was but natural therefore that he, along with his Christian neighbor, should be attacked in his moral fibre in the overcrowded tenements in which he lived; that he should contract diseases which were new and strange to him, and to which he had formerly not been liable. In fact his apparent immunity to tuberculosis to-day, in spite of conditions, is a medical anomaly. The wonder is that a greater percentage of the Jewish population residing in the so-called "Ghetto" of our large cities have not fallen victims to the vices and diseases which breed there. The concern of the thinking Jew lies in the fact that the percentage of Jewish vice and crime and disease as found to-day in our large cities, small as it may be, is nevertheless distinctly larger than statistics show to have been the case heretofore.

In the House of Refuge on Randall's Island, there were 260 Jewish boys and girls in November, 1904. In the Juvenile Asylum there are 262 Jewish children under sixteen years of age committed for various misdemeanors. Compared with the entire Jewish population of the city, the number is insignificant, and the ratio will probably be found to be considerably lower than that of the general population. To the Jewish philanthropist and sociologist, there is cause for alarm in these figures, because he sees that the crowded life of the streets, the lack of playgrounds and breathing spots, the absence of proper home surroundings have injurious effects on the Jewish child, to whom the simplest legal misdemeanors were in the past unknown. And what is true of the child is true of the adult. Whatever parasitic poverty may exist among Jews in the United States and in particular in New York, whatever percentage of criminals and vicious persons may have developed, the

results are in the main due to the overcrowding and congestion, to which their poverty has subjected them.

The remedy is plain and simple. Those whom poverty and oppression have thrown together in such close proximity and who are compelled to live under such unnatural conditions, must be given the opportunity to settle in localities where ample room will be given for normal, physical, intellectual, and moral growth. In New York, with characteristic insight, many are realizing the impossibility of full development in their present restricted environment and are taking up residence in the less settled outlying section of the city. There is no doubt that the improvement in transportation facilities, resulting from subways and tunnels, will considerably diminish the population of the East Side. To effect large results, some comprehensive scheme is necessary to relieve the congestion and to prevent the possibility of a recurrence of this congestion.

## (B) PHILADELPHIA

In view of the fact that a much greater number of Russian Jews have congregated in New York than in any other city in the country it would seem that any general study of philanthropic and charitable activity, both as regards what they accomplish among themselves as well as that exerted in their behalf, should properly be made in that centre. There are, however, considerations which weigh in favor of taking a less congested community as the subject of such an analysis, particularly in view of various circumstances which obviously affect the conditions in question.

In certain respects, so apparent as to have received general recognition, Philadelphia is the typical American city. It is pre-eminently the city of homes as distinguished from dwellings on the tenement plan, which are so marked a feature of urban life in Europe and whose American counterpart is found in such extreme development in New York and to a lesser degree in Chicago.

In the less crowded condition of the poorer precincts of Philadelphia as compared with those of the other large cities of the country, with a correspondingly greater latitude to the individual affected by this condition, the assimilative force of American institutions has greater play. Its processes are carried out with less hindrance both from within and from without; the Ghetto is less constrained by the surrounding pressure and therefore less intensified within itself. In this light, the Russian Jews in Philadelphia may be regarded as affording a fair index of their status and course of development in this country, under comparatively normal conditions.

Our immediate subject, charity, presents indeed but one aspect of that development, but it is a phase more essentially Jewish, perhaps, than any other. For the Jew is nothing if not charitable, and as the Russian Jews are intensely Jewish, their activity in the field of philanthropic endeavor is correspondingly marked. But as Jewish

charity compasses every element of the community we must needs, in considering it as regards the Russian Jew, distinguish, as already indicated, between that which has been and is being done for them by the older settled portion of the community and that which is done by them and among themselves.

A proper understanding of the conditions with which we have to deal requires a passing glance at the historical bearings of the subject. The conditions in general may be regarded as dating from 1882, although a considerable number of Russians, or rather of Polish and Hungarian Jews, had reached here before that time. At that period the immigration of Jews from the German states was fast declining. It had gone on in considerable though no very large numbers from 1820 to 1870. With the diminishing needs of the older section of the community, its charitable activities were extended in behalf of the later comers and its various organizations were either merged in those of the latter or were gradually supplanted by them. The project of a Jewish Foster Home, first suggested in 1850, was realized in 1855. In 1864, the Jewish Hospital was organized. In 1868, the Familien Waisen Erziehungs Verein, subsequently given its English title, Orphans Guardians, replaced an earlier chevra (society) which supported widows and orphans. In 1869 the sporadic efforts to raise charity funds through banquets and balls, which had gone on from an early date, were concentrated in a Charity Ball Association and in the same year a similar movement resulted in a number of the earlier aid societies being combined in the organization of the United Hebrew Charities. In the seventies all these organizations grew to increased importance and power for good and were reinforced by others, such as the lying-in aid society, Esrath Nashim, in 1873, the Rappaport Benevolent Association in 1874, and others of a more temporary character.

Up to this time the number of East European Jews settled in Philadelphia was probably less than three thousand of a total Jewish population of perhaps twelve thousand. Those who were here had come, a few at a time, as part of the normal throng of emigrants from Europe, much as the majority of the German Jews had come in the previous years almost invariably into circles of relatives or friends who awaited them.

It was in Philadelphia, as it happened, that the first



large ship load of Jewish refugees from Russia landed, early in March, 1882. They had a memorable reception. Christians of every denomination joined with the Jewish people of the city in offering these wanderers a welcome to our shores. Special arrangements were made for housing, feeding and distributing them, and the entire number, aggregating some four hundred souls, were gradually placed in a position to help themselves. The belief was at first entertained that the anti-Jewish riots which had driven these people from their native homes were but a passing ebullition of the dregs of the populace. But the manifest connivance of the Russian authorities with the plundering and murderous rabble and the leniency with which the leaders of the mob were treated by the courts of justice opened the way for further outrages in all parts of the empire. Presently, in May, 1882, the work of the rabble was taken up by the government under the provisions of the notorious May laws. Gradually but steadily the severity of these measures was increased until they culminated in the widespread official outrages of 1890, when Moscow and other large cities in the interior of the empire were depopulated of their Jewish citizens and the unfortunates herded in the so-called "Jewish Pale" along the Western frontiers of the empire. Thence they have made their way, those that could find a way, in the only direction possible — westward — with little hope of betterment except across the channel in England or across the Atlantic in America. And so the comparatively small colony of Polish Jews who had previously reached our shores was rapidly and abnormally augmented by refugees from all portions of the Russian Empire.

It was inevitable that under these circumstances the existing machinery of charity, ample as it had been for all previous needs, should become overwhelmed and all its resources should be strained to the extreme. That the older and native born Jewish communities were heavily burdened, and that they rose to the occasion, is traceable in the records of Jewish charities generally, and those of Philadelphia may well serve as an example. The expenditures of the United Hebrew Charities of this city, which had been decreasing for some years previous to 1880, and which, exclusive of costs of administration, had fallen to less than \$12,000 in that year, rose to \$18,000; in 1882, to over \$20,000; in 1883, to over \$22,000; in the

years from 1885 to 1890, to fully \$31,000; in 1891, and under the grievous stress of 1892 to nearly \$48,000. In 1893-1894 the expenditures averaged nearly \$40,000 yearly, and from then to the present the average has been \$26,000, varying with the number and condition of the new arrivals.

Previous to 1882, the Russians, or as they mostly were at that time, the Polish Jews, had formed but a secondary factor in the work of the United Hebrew Charities. By 1884 the proportion of Russian Jews among the applicants had reached 75 per cent. and since 1892 there has been among these scarcely any other element whatever.

The records of the Jewish Foster Home reveal similar conditions. Up to 1882 the proportion of children of Polish or Russian parentage among its inmates was very small. In that year the proportion rose to 75 per cent.; in 1891 it rose to 91 per cent.—nearly two-thirds of the number having been born in Russia; and in 1892 it was 92 per cent., but only one-third of them of Russian nativity.

The Orphans' Guardian Society, which places its charges in private homes, has found its efforts taken up in a manner not essentially different from that experienced at the Foster Home.

In 1881 the proportion of East European Jews among the patients at the Jewish Hospital was 11.5 per cent.; in 1882 it rose to 34 per cent. In the following four years the proportion averaged some 24 per cent.; in the next four years about 30 per cent., and in 1891 it rose to 42 per cent.

Another of the older charity societies, the Esrath Nashim, or Helping Women, is to be noted in this regard. This society was organized in 1873 in aid of lying-in women at their homes, and after the year 1882 devoted its efforts chiefly to the needs of the refugee immigrants from Russia. In 1891 the demands on this charity, as on all others, grew beyond the compass of the organization, and the society found itself impelled to institute a central establishment for the care of its charges. The society was reorganized as the Jewish Maternity Association in 1892 and established near Sixth and Spruce Streets a hospital known as the Maternity Home, which has since been materially enlarged. In 1893 the patients treated at the hospital numbered 116, and 15 were treated at their homes.

In 1903<sup>1</sup> the number of patients was 1,121, of whom 244 were treated at the hospital. A training school for nurses was added in 1901, and at the same time a branch of the work was inaugurated at Atlantic City as the Jewish Seaside Home for invalid mothers and children. This branch has been latterly reorganized as a separate society and its work considerably enlarged.

The continuance and growth of the Russian Jewish immigration after 1882 soon brought the community to realize the necessity of dealing with its difficulties in the preventive as well as palliative sense. In the fall of 1884 a movement to this end, originally started by one of the earlier refugees, Jacob Judelson, was taken up by the "uptown" community and resulted in the formation of the Association for the Protection of Jewish Immigrants. This society was framed with the idea of its continuance by the Russian Jews themselves, but its work rapidly grew beyond the ability of that disturbed element to cope with it, and it has since been maintained almost exclusively by the efforts of the older section of the community.

The association was organized, as stated in its constitution, "to remove and lessen the distresses of arriving Jewish immigrants and to aid and assist such as, for want of acquaintance with the language and laws of the country, are in danger of being oppressed; to obtain employment for them and in other respects to aid and relieve them."

To this end an agent was engaged to supervise the landing of the Jewish immigrants at this port and to guard and direct them in their course to their proper destinations. At the instance of the association and with the co-operation of the late Mahlon H. Dickinson, president of the State Board of Charities, its agent was clothed with official authority by that body, at that time acting as a commission of immigration on behalf of the federal government. The agent was aided by officers and members of the association acting in rotation, and soon the system gave results that commended it to all who were cognizant of its workings. To further its purposes the association leased a large dwelling at 931 South Fourth Street, and fitted up its 12 rooms with all the requisites of a temporary shelter. An employ-

<sup>1</sup> The number for this year is given in preference to the figures from the following report, which contains records for sixteen months to conform to the year of the Federation of Jewish Charities.



ment agency was organized and a competent agent was placed in charge of the office and the shelter. In 1887 this lodge was discontinued, the wayfarers being housed under contract with responsible Jewish boarding houses. At the same time the functions of the employment bureau were taken over by the Auxiliary Branch of the United Hebrew Charities, which had been specially organized for the purpose. In other directions, however, the work of the association was largely extended, including the tracing of relatives and friends in all sections of the Union for immigrants who sought them in this city, and the recovery of baggage waylaid at numerous depots and stopping places, from the Russian frontiers to the various ports on both sides of the Atlantic. This charity is still active and has done much to lessen the miseries of thousands of helpless and hapless wayfarers in their troubled course.

From 1882 to 1904 the number of Jewish immigrants at the port of Philadelphia is estimated at about 60,000. Of this number the records of the Association for the Protection of Jewish Immigrants contain the names of the greater part. Other data regarding the newcomers, such as the destination to which they were booked, the points to which they were finally forwarded, their general condition, etc., are also included in these records. The annual influx at Philadelphia has varied from about 1,500 in 1884 and 2,310 in 1886, to 4,984 in 1891 and 5,324 in 1893, fluctuating since then down to 1,649 in 1899, rising to 3,870 in 1900. The renewed proscriptions and more widespread expulsions of Jewish citizens which blackened the history of Russia in 1891 and 1893 are marked by the high figures of the refugee immigration of those years and a similar flood tide of Roumanian wickedness and folly is indicated in the figures of 1900. The aftermath of these harvests of misery is visible though not measurable in Russian famines and Roumanian bankruptcy.

Passing reference has already been made to the employment bureau of the United Hebrew Charities. This was instituted in 1886 through a special organization of young men, which took the form of an auxiliary branch of the charities and whose individual members gave their personal efforts to the cause. The office was located in the southern section of the city and eventually in the Hebrew Education Society's Building, Touro Hall, where it is still conducted. The number of applicants at this employment bureau, ex-



clusive of a large number of temporary sojourners, has averaged over 600 per annum, of whom a considerable proportion have been placed in positions to maintain themselves. Besides this bureau various organizations of women have been formed as auxiliaries to the United Charities, such as the Ladies' Auxiliary Committee, the Ladies' Volunteer Visiting Committee, and the Personal Interest Society, whose activity has aided to a great degree in mitigating the suffering of the needy among the Russian Jews.

The gravity of the conditions which the increasing distress of the Russian Jews entailed upon those of Western Europe and America called forth in 1890 the monumental effort of the late Baron Maurice de Hirsch for their amelioration. Of the munificent endowment which he founded for this purpose on this side of the Atlantic in the form of the Baron de Hirsch Trust, a proportion of the income is allotted to Philadelphia. Of this allotment, \$700 per month was dispensed directly to the needy among the recent arrivals, for support while learning trades, for tools, and for transportation to the interior. This charity continues to be dispensed, in varying amounts, through the Auxiliary Branch of the United Hebrew Charities. Since 1892 a portion of this fund, amounting to \$2,400 per year, has been allotted to educational work through the Hebrew Education Society.

One important factor in the charitable work put forth in Philadelphia yet remains to be considered, the central agency of ways and means. This agency is now effected through an organization chartered under the title of the Federation of Jewish Charities, which took up in May, 1901, the work of financing the various charity undertakings. Up to that time this troublesome task was performed largely by the Hebrew Charity Ball Association, which supplemented the sporadic efforts of the individual officers and members of the different societies with the proceeds of their annual entertainments. The Charity Ball Association was long a mainstay of Jewish philanthropic work in Philadelphia. It was organized, coincidently with the United Hebrew Charities in 1869, for the purpose of continuing regularly the charity benefit entertainments which had previously been given at irregular intervals as occasion arose. In time the Hebrew Charity Ball became one of the most notable functions of the winter season in Philadel-

phia, attended by large and representative gatherings, without distinction of creed. Its proceeds, generally amounting to over \$20,000, were distributed among the various charity societies according to their respective needs. These allotments, however, still left the major part of the necessary income to be derived from other sources, from membership dues, and endowment funds, donation day collections, fairs, theatre benefits, and, in large measure from contributions through the synagogues on the high holy days, and finally through specially solicited funds. With the growing demands of recent years these diffuse and often conflicting agencies of financial support became more and more unsatisfactory as well as inadequate. These conditions led to the adoption of what has come to be known as the "Liverpool Plan" of raising charity funds, the term being derived from the fact that the method was first applied in Liverpool. It was subsequently adopted by the Jewish communities of Cincinnati and Chicago and latterly, as indicated, in Philadelphia, as well as in other cities.

Under this system every member of the community who contributes annually to the Federation a sum at least equal to the total of a members' dues in all the constituent societies has the right of membership in each of them, and if the annual contribution be less than that sum, then to a corresponding extent in such of the several organizations as may be preferred by the contributor. On the other hand the organizations themselves are pledged to refrain from all manner of entertainments and assemblies for pleasure in the name of charity, or to solicit funds from the public otherwise than through the Federation, though of course, voluntary contributions from friends and patrons are not excluded.

The results of this measure during the first years of its operation in Philadelphia have been very gratifying. Where in the preceding year the income of the constituent societies outside of that from endowment funds was not over \$95,000 the subscription to the Federation in its first year realized \$121,864.07, the second year \$127,398.18, and the third year, ending April 30, 1904, 121,650.80. The Federation has sought, and to an encouraging extent has already attained, the great object of unifying the forces of the community in the direction of charity work. The system gives promise not only of rendering the work itself

more efficient but also of bringing a larger number of individuals to join in it, and of imbuing the latter with a due measure of public spirit.

Passing to the consideration of the philanthropic works which the Russian Jewish immigrants in Philadelphia have organized among themselves, we find much that illustrates, at the same time that it reveals, the intense vitality of the Jewish spirit. It must be remembered that we are dealing with a community of refugees, rather than emigrants. The majority of these people did not leave their native lands of their own free will and desire but were forced to go, often not only without preparation for their journey but frequently after being robbed of most of their belongings through violence at home and of much of the poor remainder through chicanery on the way. The earliest Russian Jewish immigrants, those of the years 1882-85, were almost all of them victims of violence in one form or another. So, too, were the thousands of their countrymen who were driven out of Russia during the renewed outbreaks of barbarism that centred at Moscow in 1890. Scarcely even those who followed their forerunners with passage prepaid by relatives on this side could reasonably be regarded as normal immigrants. They were, as the majority of them still are, members of families that had been broken up in the course of the persecutions; wives and children joining some father who had preceded them; sometimes parents with younger children called to join older ones already settled here and frequently other relatives and friends of earlier and more fortunate seekers after freedom and fortune in America.

Like the first association of their Sephardic and German predecessors, the first "Russian" Jewish society was a *Chevre Bikur Cholim*, or Brotherhood for Visiting the Sick. The small community of Polish Jews who settled about 1870 in the northeastern section of the city, in the Richmond district, organized a number of chevras that gradually merged into a congregation which included the usual mutual aid and eleemosynary features. Another of these earlier associations for mutual aid and charity is the *Chevre Chesed Shel Emeth*.

Following the example of their German predecessors, the Polish immigrants soon organized national societies for mutual benefit and aid, some of which were established as early as 1860. During the seventies several lodges of

this character were established in Philadelphia and continued their activity to the present day. In the course of time, as the immigrants from one or another of the East European lands grew in numbers, new societies were started, composed of individuals drawn together by closer ties of origin. Among the earliest an association composed of Galicians, formed in 1876 the Krakauer Congregation, named after the capital of Galicia, and which in 1879 was merged with a chevra of the same name. Dating also from the decade of the seventies is the Hungarian congregation of the southern part of the city, and the Austro-Hungarian Association in the northern section. Both these institutions, in addition to other purposes, have the usual functions of the mutual aid and charity organizations. There are various other societies of this nature, most of them in the southern section of the city, and all of them active in their mission of charity and good will. In general, the East European Jews of the earlier and voluntary immigration prior to 1882 were of a class of sturdy and self-reliant people, who were mostly quite capable of taking care of themselves and of those dependent on or connected with them. They comprised but few individuals needing charitable aid and these they provided for among themselves.

It was different with the refugees who escaped hither after 1882. These came not only in larger numbers but also in greater need, and inevitably strained the resources of their earlier settled countrymen as well as those of their co-religionists of other origin. The several years following the beginning of this movement comprised a period of marked disorganization among the newcomers. As soon, however, as the first years of stress and struggle were past, reorganization began to become apparent and in the course of the decade one after another of various mutual aid societies were formed, so that in 1892 they had organized 28 mutual aid societies besides 5 lodges and 5 synagogues.

A marked development of communal activity in the Russian Jewish community dates from about 1890. In that year the immigrant shelter, carried on by the Association for the Protection of Jewish Immigrants, was taken over by the Hachnosas Orchim, or Wayfarer's Lodge. This society, incorporated in 1891, opened a house for the temporary shelter and maintenance of immigrants waiting to find



employment or relatives or friends of whom they had lost trace, and has developed considerable activity in that respect. The society now owns and occupies two adjoining houses at 218 and 220 Lombard Street, at times accommodating over 100 inmates. It has about 500 members and 1,000 contributors paying a total of about \$2,500 annually, besides donations of clothing, food, and other supplies. In 1898 this society extended its sphere to include the maintenance of a Moshav Z'kenim or Home for the Aged, where a number of superannuated men and women are permanently sheltered. This feature of the institution is being specially fostered, and will doubtless form the main branch of the society's activity when, as is to be hoped, the immigrant shelter will no longer be a necessity.

In 1891 the Maimonides Clinic for the treatment of indigent immigrants by Russian Jewish physicians was established and was succeeded in 1896 by the Franklin Free Dispensary. In 1889 a society of a similar nature was organized under the name of the Beth Israel Hospital and the following year the dispensary and hospital societies were merged. A fully equipped dispensary was established at 236 Pine Street. At about the same time the Mount Sinai Hospital Association was organized and in a short time absorbed the dispensary society. It also established an out-patient department. The hospital erected at Fifth and Wilder Streets was opened in the spring of 1905.

In 1892 the Independent Chevra Kadisho was established to afford free burial in cases where the family of the deceased is too poor to bear the expense. Its membership is about 3,000, who pay ten cents per month. The society has purchased properties at 408-10-12 Christian Street, on the site of which there are erected a synagogue, school building, and hall in addition to the rooms used for the society's own purposes. There are three smaller free burial societies with a similar object.

A loan society, the Women's Society, Gemilas Chasodim, was organized in 1896. It makes loans without interest to deserving persons in amounts from \$5 to \$25, repayable in installments. Pledges of gold or silver are required as security. The capital of the society is \$2,378.87 and the amount loaned during the past year was \$3,050. There is a smaller organization with a similar purpose.

Among relief societies should be mentioned the Malbish Arumim (Clothing the Naked), which has been active since 1894, with the object of helping the needy children of the Talmud Torah schools with necessary clothing. It has about 200 members. A very worthy charitable effort is represented by the United Relief Association which includes about 200 members and affords aid in cases requiring immediate attention, furnishes matzos (unleavened bread) to the poor, and wine and eggs to the sick. The Roumanian Relief Association, established in 1900, has developed into the Roumanian Educational Society, which carries on a night school at 422 N. Fourth Street. One of the latest and most active of the charitable societies is the Ladies' Hebrew Emergency Society, organized in 1904, which has a membership of 300 and an income of \$1,600.

Among the important charities established by Russian Jews is the Home for Hebrew Orphans, which occupies the large building at the southwest corner of Tenth and Bainbridge Streets. It has a membership of about 3,000, who contribute from 10 cents per month to \$5.00 per annum. The annual income last year to August 31, 1904, was \$12,315.35. The home gives shelter and training to 61 children.

From what has been here noted, it will be apparent that the process of generating a stable and progressive community out of the disorganized and harried victims of Slavic ignorance and brutality is well under way in Philadelphia. Much yet remains to be done, not only among themselves, but by other elements of the community, to further their progress toward stability and order, but the advances already attained by the Russian Jewish community afford an ample reassurance for the future.

## (C) CHICAGO

During the Russian Jewish immigration of 1881-82, about two thousand persons found refuge in the city of Chicago. A special committee, known as the Russian Refugee Aid Committee, had full charge of the immigrants and of the many problems incident to their care. The committee, which was composed of representative citizens, was independent of the Hebrew Relief Association. It succeeded in handling the difficulties of providing for the immigrants in a satisfactory manner. About \$14,000 was contributed as a special fund to defray the expense incurred.

Families were separated in groups of ten, each group being installed in a temporary home, with one family at the head. The privileges of such a home were ordinarily granted for three weeks. At the end of that time a family was expected to be in a position to take quarters on its own responsibility. Most of the people settled in a district now known as the Ghetto, which even at that early time contained a large Jewish population.

Every possible effort was made by the committee to procure employment for the heads of families, and so responsive did the general public in the city prove that it was only during the last few months of the year that it was necessary to send the immigrants into the country towns throughout the state. The majority of the men were either merchants or peddlers; some were laborers, and a very small number mechanics. A member of the committee recently stated that most of the immigrants succeeded fairly well in their various lines of employment, and very few were afterwards forced upon the care of the Hebrew Relief Association.

During the past twenty years or more, the many Jewish relief-giving societies had been working independently, without due co-operation, or a spirit of mutual helpfulness. Each society had its own method of raising annually the necessary funds for the year's work. The public was,

therefore, continually annoyed by the receipt of benefit tickets, through the mail, or otherwise, for balls, festivals, theatrical performances, concerts, card parties, and other forms of entertainment. In order to bring the various philanthropic forces of the city, especially the relief agencies, into closer and more sympathetic relation and to establish a plan of raising money in a manner more acceptable to contributors to charity, the Associated Jewish Charities of Chicago was organized.

The new organization received its charter in April, 1900. "The particular business and objects for which it is formed are to provide a permanent, efficient and practical mode of collecting, administering and distributing the contributions of the Jews and others of Chicago for private charitable purposes; to put into practical and efficient operation the best systems for relieving and preventing want, and checking pauperism among the Jewish poor of said city; to aid the sick, the aged, the poor, the unfortunate, the widows and orphans." This new association proved a financial success in the first year of its existence.

One of the most desirable results has been the consolidation of all relief-giving agencies. Relief, such as donations of cash, fuel and clothing, is distributed through one central body, the Relief Department of the United Hebrew Charities. The women's organizations formerly contributing relief have practically given up work of this nature, and are devoting their energies to specific charities designated by the United Hebrew Charities.

The institutions and societies receiving support from the Associated Jewish Charities are: The United Hebrew Charities, for running expense of the Michael Reese Hospital; Dispensary and Relief Department, with its branches; Home for Aged Jews; Chicago Home for Jewish Orphans; Jewish Manual Training School; Maxwell Street Settlement; Bureau of Personal Service; Home for Jewish Friendless and Working Girls; the Woman's Loan Association; Chicago Lying-in Dispensary and Hospital, for Dispensary Department. Donations are also sent to the Cleveland Hebrew Orphan Asylum and the National Home for Consumptives at Denver.

Although the institutions supported by the Associated Jewish Charities are managed by their special boards of directors, they are visited by sub-committees from the central organization and are subject to that organization.



In October, 1859, the several societies dispensing charity to the Jewish poor of Chicago organized for the purpose of working jointly under the name of the United Hebrew Relief Association. The object was to aid distressed co-religionists by providing medical assistance and material relief. For the twenty years succeeding the formation of this union of societies about \$120,000 was expended in the relief department proper. The subscriptions to this general relief fund increased steadily from year to year, \$389,500 having been received from 1879 to 1899, inclusive, the expenditures keeping pace with the receipts. During the greater part of its existence, the Relief Department has conducted under its auspices the Michael Reese Hospital, the West Side Free Dispensary, and a labor bureau. The organization is now known as the United Hebrew Charities. It is located on the South Side at 223 Twenty-sixth Street, somewhat distant from the congested districts. The Relief Department confers the ordinary benefits of such a department, distributing mainly cash, clothing and fuel. Transportation is an item of considerable expense to the association. Since the organization of the Associated Jewish Charities, the scope of the work of the United Hebrew Charities has been materially enlarged.

The Michael Reese Hospital (established in 1881) contains fully 65 per cent. of Russian Jews among its patients annually, according to its superintendent. The number of patients, about 2,000, shows how large is the work of this institution. An additional equipment is needed and the sum of \$400,000 has recently been raised for a new hospital on the old grounds.

A dispensary for poor Jews was founded and located in the Ghetto district during 1893. This dispensary is a part of the United Hebrew Charities and is in charge of a special board. The spacious quarters and excellent equipment of a new building erected a few years ago have delighted physician and patient alike and made it possible to do much more effective work.

In February, 1884, an employment bureau was opened in connection with the United Hebrew Charities in its office on Twenty-sixth Street. The object of this bureau is to make families self-supporting by securing employment for the wage workers. The majority of the applicants are laborers, mechanics, and factory workers. The stock yards, iron yards, tanneries, various other factories, and depart-

ment stores co-operate with this bureau. Merchants, hucksters and peddlers are helped by the loan societies, which thus materially supplement the work of the Employment Bureau.

The Chicago Woman's Aid, an organization for literary and philanthropic purposes, for three seasons supported a work-room for women. The work-room was in charge of a paid superintendent, and members of the society took an active part in the executive and personal service departments. Work was provided for about five months each year during the winter. Since the union of all relief-giving forces, the work-room became part of and supported by the United Hebrew Charities. The members of the Chicago Woman's Aid, however, superintended the management of the work-room and were active in the same manner as heretofore. The rooms were on the West Side, within walking distance of Hull House, thus being convenient for women who wish to leave their young children at the Hull House Day Nursery. The hours were from 9 a. m. to 12 m., and from 1 to 4 p. m. The superintendent was assisted by one permanently employed cutter and several who work part of the time. In extreme cases, work was supplied at home, but it was preferred to have women come to the work room. The garments made were baby outfits, including skirts, nightgowns, sheets, etc. Other articles made were ladies' underwear, calico wrappers, children's dresses, boys' blouses, overalls, physicians' coats, and linens, such as towels, pillow cases and sheets. The beneficiaries of the work room were such women as would ordinarily be entitled to the benefits of relief societies, especially the United Hebrew Charities. Abandoned wives, widows, and women with invalid husbands were employed. They received seventy-five cents a day. The daily earnings were formerly fifty cents. When payment was made at this rate, it was still necessary, in most cases, for the United Hebrew Charities to advance the rent for the women employed. It was, therefore, considered advisable to let the women earn the extra amount, instead of having them apply to the Relief Department for it. A warm lunch was furnished.

The employment of these women, requiring them to give at least a partial equivalent for what they get, is a most creditable way of helping them. It is far superior to the old-time method of unconditional giving. It tends to keep

them away from the relief agencies, fosters self-respect, and is, in many ways, a most wholesome substitute for alms. It gives those who ordinarily spend their days in dingy, unclean tenements an opportunity to leave the crowded quarters for seven hours a day, to breathe purer air, to learn the value of cleanliness, and to live in an atmosphere of cheerfulness and refinement.

The Home for Jewish Orphans was founded in March, 1893. In the fall of the following year a private residence was rented in the southern portion of the city, where orphans were sheltered until 1899, when the present permanent Home was ready for occupancy. It is located opposite the Home for Aged Jews, corner Drexel Avenue and Sixty-second Street. It is for the benefit of orphans, residents of Cook County, where the death of the parent or parents occurs within the boundaries of the county. Children of an insane parent are also eligible. The number of inmates is 172, of whom 90 per cent. are of Russian or Polish Jewish origin.

The Home for Aged Jews was opened for occupancy in 1893. Of the 71 inmates in the Home, 12 are Russian and Polish Jewish. Ordinarily, the aged Russian and Polish Jews cannot be prevailed upon to enter this Home. It is impossible to convince them that all the laws pertaining to a strictly kosher plan (that is with food served according to the Mosaic law) are enforced. For this reason, the Russian Jews of Chicago have made strenuous efforts to establish their own home for the aged, which they maintain in a manner to suit the orthodox.

The Home for Jewish Friendless and Working Girls is a recent addition. There are 120 occupants of its building.

Early in the winter of 1900, a number of Russian Jews on the West Side held local meetings for the purpose of enlisting the sympathies of the people in behalf of a home for aged orthodox Jews. The idea was conceived by residents of the Russian district, where many of the aged live in privation and want. Appeals for contributions were sent to local societies, to the social and beneficial organizations, and to the Russian Jews at large. The project was enthusiastically received. Ground valued at \$5,600 was purchased opposite one of the large parks of the city, far removed from the haunts of poverty. For an entire week during December, 1900, a bazaar was held for the benefit of the Home fund. The Russian Jewish population

worked arduously to make this affair a success, and their efforts were rewarded by a \$11,000 cash account to be added to the fund already in hand. The Home received its first inmates May 3, 1903. There are 48 inmates (1904).

The Bureau of Personal Service was organized in November, 1897. The Bureau is administrative in its policy, its object being to bring into closer co-operation the philanthropic forces of the neighborhood, to establish a thorough system of investigation and registration, and to promote social service. It is non-sectarian, but is located in the Russian Jewish settlement and fully ninety-five per cent. of the applicants are of the Jewish faith.

The school census of 1898 showed that in the Seventh, Eighth and Nineteenth Wards, immediately adjoining each other, there were 15,339 foreign born Russian Jews, and 13,678 American born, making a total of 29,017. The greatest number of these are located in the immediate vicinity of the Bureau, which is in the heart of the Ghetto.

The Bureau gives relief only in emergency cases, referring applicants to the proper organizations for permanent help. The giving of alms is not advocated, nor is a single person recommended for such, unless no substitute can be found. Despite the fact that the office is in the midst of the greatest poverty in the city, it is not looked upon as a relief agency. In all other matters pertaining to the family life, or the needs of the poor apart from material relief, the good offices of the Bureau are sought. Throughout the neighborhood the bureau workers are called "the mothers of the poor." This expression shows clearly the sentiment of the people toward the Bureau and its relation to them. As the mother aims to meet the needs of her children, caring for their minor grievances and complaints, as well as for their grave necessities and troubles, so the Bureau endeavors to serve the poor of the vicinity. It stands as a friendly service society, stopping only at the repeated bestowal of alms.

The Bureau is in active co-operation with all the relief societies of the city; with the courts, inasmuch as they are concerned with ordinary problems of justice affecting the poor; with the loan organizations; with other societies engaged in preventive charity; and with all medical, housing, and correctional institutions or societies.

Both the superintendent and the assistant superintend-



ent are probation officers of the juvenile court. The question of caring for dependent children, not orphans, and for delinquent Jewish children had not heretofore been considered by philanthropic workers among the Jews of Chicago. The great need of doing preventive work with and for the children, particularly of the West Side, was so strongly forced upon the attention of the Bureau, that it appeared an unpardonable neglect of duty to overlook it any longer. The system of paroling a child not only gives to the probation officer access to the home and authority over the child, but brings her into close and sympathetic relations with the entire family. It has been astonishing to the Chicago public to learn that many of the children of the Ghetto are on the road to delinquency. The success of working in a friendly way with children and parents has been most gratifying.

Fully one half of the entire time of the employees of the Bureau is spent in personal service and friendly intercourse with the neighborhood people.

A work-room for women was conducted in connection with the Bureau, upon its premises. Payment was in kind at the rate of fifty cents per day; cash was given only in the most urgent cases and then not regularly. The payment in kind was on a very liberal scale. Besides food, fuel and second-hand clothing, women had the privilege of purchasing household goods, shoes, new wearing apparel, or any necessary merchandise to the amount of their earnings. From two to five days' work per week was allowed applicants, according to their needs. It is very evident, especially during the winter season, that the names of many families appear on the records of relief societies merely for clothing and fuel. Opportunity for purchasing these necessities by a certain amount of labor was afforded through the work-room. The reports for the winter months show that nearly all the work was paid in coal, shoes, and clothes. Second-hand clothing was solicited by the Work-room Committee. In this way women could earn dresses and wraps of fine, serviceable materials, which they could not possibly have gotten otherwise.

The two work-rooms to which reference has been made have gone out of existence, but a description of them has nevertheless been thought desirable.

The Russian Jew of Chicago occupies a unique position in his idea of regenerative philanthropy. No actual relief

distributing agency has been established through this population. The need of such an agency has probably not been felt, owing to the existence of the United Hebrew Charities. Nevertheless, the Russian Jew loves to give; to give freely in his own peculiar way, and never seems quite so happy as when contributing his mite towards a charitable cause. The demands upon him often become burdensome, for it is the poor man, he who earns just enough to meet his own meagre demands, who takes pleasure in giving to others. His idea of method, or a discriminate bestowing of alms, is indeed vague. In fact, he thinks very little about it. If his neighbor is in distress, he considers himself responsible, in a measure, for the welfare of that neighbor. If necessary, all his friends and acquaintances are called upon to share the responsibility. As he has established no relief agency to which he may apply for aid, he works on the theory that he is his brother's keeper. What is contributed annually, in a quiet way, by private donations, for special cases of distress, to individuals or to families, cannot well be estimated, but the amount would without doubt be surprising.

The liberal attitude that the Ghetto resident assumes toward his neighbor in distress, the sacrifices he makes, the inconveniences he suffers, the privations he endures,—his generous bestowal of time and self—are worthy of emulation; the charity of the poor for the poor puts our own to shame. The poor Russian Jew teaches us the highest type of charity. There is always room in the smallest tenement—though there be but two beds with seven occupants—for the neighboring family that is temporarily homeless; there is always a crust of bread, dry though it be, for the hungry one who needs it. A little coal can be cheerfully spared—though there be but a bucketful—if the children nearby are suffering from the cold. How gladly the proud possessor of a bonnet ties the precious object upon the head of her less fortunate sister when the latter finds it necessary to leave the neighborhood for some special purpose. Not the bonnet alone, but very often dress and wrap are loaned with equal readiness. How many a woman, the mother of a large family of little ones, goes into another home where sickness has entered, and nurses the suffering one back to health. How earnestly she goes about the work, preparing the necessary articles of diet, ministering to the needs of the little ones, doing in that

strange home what she does in her own, even to the wielding of the scrub brush for the Sabbath cleaning! It is this beautiful spirit of sharing himself and what belongs to him that constitutes the greatest charm of the Russian Jew.

Among the local Russian Jewish organizations, there are a few of minor importance, purely charitable in purpose, each having a distinct object, so that none interferes with or duplicates the work of the other. The most important local society working in the Ghetto and deriving the greater part of its support from the residents of the district is the Society for the Free Burial of the Dead. About \$5,000 is raised annually, most of the money being subscribed in weekly contributions of five, ten, or fifteen cents. Two collectors are employed for gathering these small amounts from hundreds of patrons. The society owns its own burial ground and a hearse, and employs an undertaker at a salary of \$50 a month.

The Chicago Young Men's Hebrew Charity Association, composed of young men, Russians or of Russian parentage, does more or less relief work in the winter months, expending about \$500 during the season. The Bread for the Hungry Society distributes bread and meat once a week to deserving poor. The Woman's Society, conducted in connection with the Montefiore Free School, furnishes clothing for poor boys of the school. A Sheltering Home, a small institution, is for the benefit of strangers. Transients and newcomers are given temporary lodging free of charge.

Most of the subscriptions to these various local charities are raised in small amounts, five or ten cents weekly being the usual contribution from each subscriber. In fact, this is the method in vogue throughout the district for the collection of monies for charitable purposes.

As has been indicated, the charities of the Russian Jews do not show evidence of method or union of forces. In fact, relief work, and all branches of philanthropy usually classed under this head, are considered of secondary importance to the provision of some wholesome substitute for alms. Within the Ghetto proper, including an area of about a dozen square blocks, twelve societies, each independent, are engaged in loaning money to the poorest classes. All but one, the Woman's Loan, are managed in connection with congregations. Loans, however, are not

restricted to members of congregations. Any poor Jew, regardless of belief or nationality, may become eligible to its good offices, by complying with the conditions of the society. This plan of offering a substitute for alms to the self-respecting poor is one which, in its essentials, did not originate in this country. It is a custom that the Russian Jews brought with them from their native homes.

In all our large cities and even in many of the smaller ones we find hospitals for the sick, institutions for the afflicted and dependent, societies and relief agencies for the benefit of periodically recurrent or emergency cases of distress. Yet we do not make adequate provision or offer proper relief to the respectable poor, temporarily in want, or handicapped through lack of employment, nor do we reach those who might be able to help themselves by entering into some legitimate occupation on their own responsibility and thus be spared the humiliation of receiving alms. The particular phase of philanthropy which furnishes a wholesome substitute for alms in the case of the independent, self-respecting poor, seems to have been strangely overlooked by the Jewish people engaged in caring for the needs of their Russian brethren.

We find many among our poor Russian and Polish Jews, though utterly unskilled in the trades, or incompetent, through lack of proper physical development, to serve as laborers, who are still able to deal in certain wares, or conduct small business concerns, on their own account. The amount required to give them a start and an occasional lift is considerably less than would be the cost of pensioning them by a relief society. However opposed a man may be to accepting gifts unconditionally,—when he becomes through force of circumstances initiated in the pangs of hunger, when his family are suffering for want of bread, and no employment is open to him, he is naturally forced to accept aid either outright or conditionally. The “outright” policy is most dangerous, for it opens invitingly the doors to pauperism. The man who with reluctance and aversion tastes the first bitterness of alms gradually, with ambition and manhood stunted, looks upon charity as a necessity, and finally as a natural right.

The Russian Jew, the Jew of the Ghetto, has taught us the lesson of preventing such demoralization, by offering to the poor not alms but a wise substitute. Give the honest poor but half a chance and they will surprise the skeptical.



Loan a small amount to a man struggling for existence, let him invest it in a legitimate occupation, let him by thrift manage to keep body and soul together; let him at the same time repay the loan in small installments, without flinching, and without shirking his responsibility, and what greater proof do we require that undaunted courage, ambition, honor, and manliness are virtues of the poor? Not to annihilate but rather to preserve these sterling qualities is the mission of the loan organizations. Not only are these societies educational, not only do they stand for preventive relief, fostering self respect, but hundreds are annually spared the necessity of becoming the victims of chattel mortgage companies, pawn brokers and money lenders. What the contact of the poor with the latter agencies means needs no explanation; their unscrupulous methods, and the hardships endured through them are patent facts.

The Russian Jews are a thrifty people, thoroughly appreciating the benefits accruing to them as beneficiaries of loan societies. The borrower soon realizes that the loan organization is to him no more nor less than a savings bank, where the original amount is loaned to him with the privilege of borrowing it again when it has been repaid. Thus, each time he pays his small weekly installment, he is saving so much out of his earnings for his particular use at some future day. It is this advantage that accounts for the prompt returns on money loaned and the fact that fully 95 per cent. of all money so loaned is promptly repaid.

In the Chicago Ghetto, along the Jefferson Street markets, as well as throughout the entire district, there are comparatively few of the peddlers, vendors, and keepers of small stands and shops, who have not been given a start in life or helped over rugged places by loans from local organizations. Many confess that it is this opportunity of periodically borrowing money that has saved them from absolute need. It is marvelous that the poorest of the poor, physically weakened from suffering and privation, herded together like animals, seemingly without the necessities of life, with homes barren of the most ordinary comforts, can have the courage to borrow money and return it as they do dollar for dollar. It is gratifying to see many slowly, very slowly, creeping up from urgent distress to

comparative comfort without the loss of self respect and with the ennobling conviction that they are meeting their obligations honestly.

The business method in vogue in all the loan societies is more or less uniform. Loans are made in purely a business way. Each borrower gives his note, indorsed by a reliable guarantor. He borrows the money with the knowledge that he must repay it. All loans are returned in weekly payments. The work in connection with the societies is voluntary, no paid officers being employed. The reliability of guarantors is always inquired into, and most of the societies investigate the needs of the borrowers. This is necessary in order to prevent fraud and the borrowing of money as a subterfuge for obtaining alms, or for purposes not consistent with the objects of the organizations.

The capital of these societies is altogether about \$15,000. The entire amount is relented about three times annually, the sum of about \$45,000 being actually placed at the disposal of borrowers during a year's time. In most societies loans are returnable in ten installments. The Woman's Loan Association allows twenty weeks. About fifteen weeks is the average time for repayment in full. It can therefore be readily seen that the original capital of \$15,000 is loaned at least three times during a year. The loans are usually for amounts of \$10, \$15, or \$20, and up to \$100 or more. Probably not less than one thousand persons avail themselves of the offices of these societies.

The financial standing of the guarantor is not so grave a consideration as might be inferred from the fact that his signature to a note makes him liable for payment, in case the borrower fails to meet his obligation. An honest borrower is more desirable than the wealthiest guarantor. In cases where a man has made his payments promptly, so that his integrity and sense of honor have been established, a second signature becomes a matter of form. There are many instances where both borrower and guarantor are equally poor, yet equally honest. Ordinarily, it is not the well-to-do that act as guarantors. The shopkeeper with an established trade, or the owner of a small tenement, regardless of encumbrances, are the ones who stand ready to confer a favor upon the needy. The risk is small. The poor realize fully that the guarantor is a friend in the hour of need and that it is necessary to keep faith with him.

The Woman's Loan Association, composed of about fifty prominent Russian Jewish women, claims to be the only organization of its kind managed entirely by women. Only women are accepted as active members, and all business is transacted by them. Records of its work are kept and a thorough investigation is made of all applicants for loans, and of the financial standing of the guarantors. The Bureau of Personal Service furnishes the investigators. The loan committee meets at its office every Monday evening from 7:30 to 10:30 for the transaction of business. Not a single loan was lost in the first three years that the association was at work.

In the fall of 1893, the first steps were taken in the Chicago Ghetto to introduce this most creditable form of philanthropy.

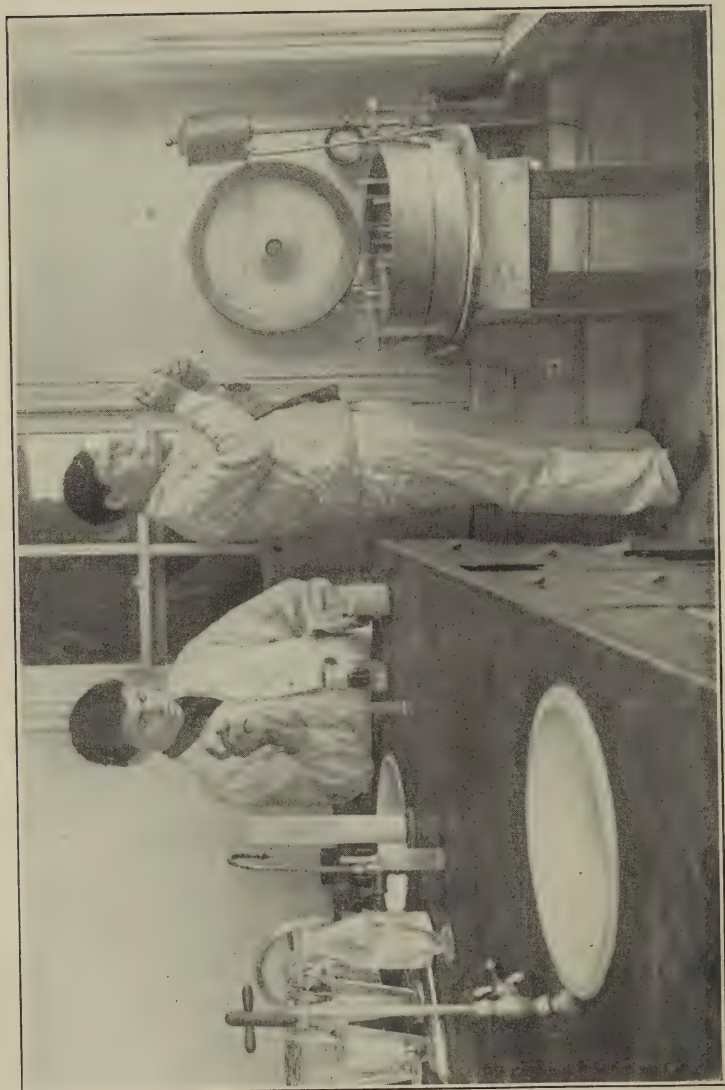
While at times alms are absolutely necessary, through lack of forethought or failure to make adequate provision, a relief organization is often responsible for implanting habits that only too frequently become a menace to self respect. Many applicants for relief could be educated to a higher standard of accepting help. Where the question of relief alone is considered, those who have become hardened to asking aid and those who, on the contrary, are painfully conscious of being forced to apply for alms, are compelled to knock alike at the same door and pass through the same ordeal. Under such circumstances, even the sensitively inclined cannot be spared certain humiliating experiences in their relations with relief societies.







JEWISH MACHINISTS AT WORK  
*Machine Shop, Woodbine, N. J.*



STUDENTS AT WORK IN LABORATORY

IV

**ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL  
CONDITION**

# ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL CONDITION

## (4) NEW YORK

By the somewhat loose phrase, "economic condition," we usually designate the condition of distribution of wealth. By "industrial condition," a term equally indefinite, the modes of acquisition of wealth are usually meant, the trades, the professions, the various kinds of economic activities. Though far from being scientifically correct, these definitions will be found available for the practical purposes of this short study. Our subject, then, is the methods and results of production and distribution of wealth in a large section of the cosmopolitan population of our metropolitan city.

Economic science knows but one satisfactory method for such a study — the statistical method. Only by means of measurements can the quantitative relations be determined; and the problem of wealth production, and, still more, of wealth distribution is primarily a quantitative problem. Yet in the whole mass of American statistical publications hardly any data can be found which would throw the faintest light upon our problem. From purely scientific considerations, it is to be regretted that the factor of religion is omitted from our census statistics however justified such omission might have been by reason of policy. We are not even aware of the exact size of the Jewish colony in New York, and the guess at 600,000 made by Joseph Jacobs,<sup>1</sup> though based upon sound statistical principles, is still but a rough guess. The difficulties increase a hundred fold if out of the whole Jewish population the Russian Jews are to be differentiated. And if our knowledge is so very limited in regard to this one item of population, how much more difficult must it be to deal with the problem which we have attempted to touch upon.

<sup>1</sup> *Jewish World*, August 17, 1902.



As the first steps toward a scientific solution of this problem still have to be made, general observations and impressions, always subjective, always more or less biased, must take the place of careful and accurate scientific data. The widest differences in these impressions must be expected. Many a charitable Jew or Christian has seen in the great New York Ghetto nothing but a huge collection of misery and poverty. On the other hand, a Canadian observer<sup>1</sup> has come to a different conclusion: "The Jews are about one eightieth of the population, yet they claim 115 out of the 4,000 millionaires of the country, about two and a half times as many as they are entitled to. . . . The business of the successful ones extends from banking to pork-packing, from realty to dry goods, from distilleries to cotton."

What is the truth? If we give an earnest thought to the economic condition of the New York Jews, the very first conclusion to which we must come is that there are wide differences in the condition of different groups—social contrasts, if you will—a characteristic feature of American life in general. It may or it may not be true that the Jews have a larger percentage of millionaires than they are statistically entitled to.<sup>2</sup> Glancing through the list of American millionaires which the *World Almanac* has published, we will come across many a Jewish name; and yet, very few names, if any, that have an "ovitch" or "etsky" at the end. While there are a considerable number of Jews among the "*haute finance*" of New York, scarcely a Russian Jew has yet succeeded in entering these exclusive circles.

With all that, the Russian Jewish population in New York is far from being the uniform mass that it appears to a superficial observer. It is true that for more than twenty years a uniform stream of poverty-stricken Russian Jews has flowed to New York—but we must not forget that the process began more than twenty years ago and

<sup>1</sup> Beckles Willson, *The New America*, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> Personally, I doubt the statement. First, Mr. Beckles Willson has given us no indication of his sources. Secondly, he has left a very important point entirely out of consideration,—that millionaires are only found amidst the population of cities. If only the 33.1 per cent. of the American people which live in the cities are counted then the Jews represent not 1/80, but 3/80 of the American people, or 150/4,000, while their millionaires are only 115/4,000. It is needless to add, however, that all such statistics, which are based upon guesses, are more than worthless; they are absurd.

that social differentiation has had time to work upon the early comers. Almost every newly arrived Russian Jewish laborer comes into contact with a Russian Jewish employer, almost every Russian Jewish tenement dweller must pay his exorbitant rent to a Russian Jewish landlord. It is almost certain that both have originally come from the same social stratum—for the rich Russian Jewish immigrant was an exception, so rare as to be almost statistically negligible,—both at present represent two aspects of the same “economic condition.” It is extremely probable that at present the majority of Russian Jewish workers work for Russian Jewish employers.

On the one hand, the ordinary business profits of manufacture and commerce, on the other the “unearned increment” in the value of real estate, have facilitated the growth of a very large and tolerably prosperous Russian Jewish middle class in New York. If there are no “ovitches” and “etskys” in the list of American millionaires, there are numbers of them in evidence on the Broadway windows and elsewhere. A large proportion of the great New York clothing industry (including the manufacturing of white goods) is in Russian Jewish hands, as well as a fair proportion of the trading in these goods, both wholesale and retail. Many other lines of commerce and manufacturing have attracted Russian Jewish hands, brains and money; yet the needle industries so called, and their accessories, have remained the great field of Russian Jewish business activity in New York.

The years (1898-1903) of unprecedented business activity and “prosperity” for the United States, caused an unusually brisk demand for the products of this Jewish industry; and the growth of Russian Jewish fortunes in New York has been the immediate result of this demand. Though we have no income statistics on which to base our suppositions, there can be not the slightest doubt that many fortunes, ranging between \$25,000 and \$200,000, have been made within these years. It was but natural that these extraordinary incomes should have been invested in real estate, and the phenomenal growth of the so-called Ghetto, which has earned the adjective “great” (used very frequently without the slightest suggestion of sarcasm), has had much to do with the formation of a number of fortunes. To one who has had an opportunity to watch the economic development of the district south of Houston Street, the

formation of a well-to-do class in the midst of the Russian Jewish colony has been a very interesting phenomenon. The general improvement in the character of the stores, the sudden appearance of a dozen or more commercial banks, the well-furnished cafés of a type utterly unknown five or six years ago, the modern apartments "with an elevator and a 'nigger boy' on the stoop" all tell eloquently of this growth. In the show windows of small street stores, specimens of furniture have appeared which would not be out of place in many an uptown residence. One might say that some of the streets, lined with fine old buildings, are retracing the steps in their history. Inhabited by the "best people" many years ago, they have gradually become the abode of some of the poorest. And now poverty is forced to fly into other streets and even other quarters, to give space to this rising middle class. Many a Jewish family has moved uptown, because it could not afford the exorbitant rents demanded by the Ghetto landlords and Ghetto conditions.

Yet the Ghetto, where so many of these Jewish fortunes are made, is not the only place where the incomes derived are spent. If the new conditions have driven many a poor family out of the Ghetto, they have also forced the migration of the richer class. The possession of a larger income has opened the eyes of many a Russian Jewish family to the negative qualities of "downtown life" which before had been considered a necessary part of Russian Jewish existence in America. The monopoly of "uptown life," which the German Jew was supposed to hold, has gradually given way. Hundreds and thousands of families have started northward in an effort to be as good as their German cousins. Lexington Avenue, the abode of the German Jew, became the ideal of the Russian Jew as well. Gradually as the Russian Jewish colony on this thoroughfare and the tributary streets grew larger, and the exclusive character of this neighborhood disappeared, a further migration westward was started; the noble thoroughfare which divides our great metropolitan city into the "elite" and the "plebes" was finally crossed, until to-day more Russian is spoken west of Fifth and Sixth Avenues than was heard on East Broadway ten years ago. There is no doubt that these fairly well-to-do Russian families in New York reach scores of thousands.

It certainly is not ready-made clothing and dry goods



alone that have brought about this prosperity in a part of the Russian Jewish population. The jewelry business, the liquor business, to a limited extent, and the drug business, to a much greater extent, have all contributed to the same end. New York Jews have come to play a very important part in the theatrical business, but outside of Yiddish theatres and music halls, within the limits of the Ghetto, the Russian Jews have hardly entered this field.

It is a characteristic phenomenon of Russian Jewish life in New York that professions have formed as important a basis of prosperity as business, and perhaps even a larger one. Some snug little fortunes and an enormous number of comfortable incomes (a term of considerable latitude, it is to be admitted) have been and are now derived from what we define as professional work, and though we have no statistics, we can safely make the statement that no other element of New York population has so large a percentage of professional people as the Jews. The German Jews would probably show a higher percentage than the Russian Jews, for the former lack the enormous working class. If, however, we were to exclude the workingmen and consider the middle class only, the German and Russian Jews would have to change their places, as the educated and well-to-do German Jew takes much more readily to business.

We cannot stop to consider at length the why and wherefore of this phenomenon; an interesting problem it undoubtedly is. The love and respect of the Russian Jew for education—unique in view of his economic condition in the old country—is one of its positive causes. A certain contempt for manual labor, noticed among a considerable number of Russian Jews—a sad but inevitable result of an enforced commercial life—is a cause much less praiseworthy. It is needless to point out how quickly this contempt vanishes under new surroundings, for, after all, the vast majority of the Russian Jewish immigrants become and remain manual workers. Be this as it may, it is a well known fact that the Russian Jewish element is largely represented in the professions of medicine, law, dentistry, engineering.

Medicine has remained one of the favorite professions. The laxity of entrance requirements, the awe of a doctor's title the Russian Jew brings from the old country, and the easy success of the older members of the profession have all contributed toward the popularity of this vocation.



Probably from four hundred to six hundred of the seven thousand physicians in greater New York are Russian Jews. Though of late symptoms of over-supply in the market have been noticed, the influx into the profession does not show any signs of abatement. The economic status of the majority is fair; many older members are well-to-do. In the real estate business of the East Side the medical man plays a part by no means unimportant. The dentists, less numerous, are much more prosperous. In the legal profession, on the contrary, the Russians cannot boast of any great success, either financial or otherwise. Pharmacy, on the border line between profession and business, has also attracted a large number of Russian youths, but the returns are far less satisfactory than those of the other occupations.

The teaching profession has probably provided a livelihood for more Jewish families than the others which we have enumerated. For obvious reasons, only the second generation, *i.e.*, those born on the American soil, or those who had emigrated at a very early age, are fit for the profession; but it will certainly be a revelation to many an American to learn how many Russian Jewish young men and girls are doing this work of "Americanization," not only of Jewish, but of Irish, German, and Italian children. There is no doubt that the Jews have supplied a greater proportion of public school teachers than either the Germans or the Italians. The profession has never been a road to fortune; yet with the latest salary schedule, a very comfortable living has been provided for several thousand families.

The important position which the Russian Jew occupies in the professions of New York City is more significant because he entered them but a short time since. Ten years ago, a Russian Jewish journalist<sup>1</sup> found only a few dozen representatives of his race in medicine and law, a few individuals in dentistry, and hardly any in the teaching profession, or in municipal service. These dozens have grown into hundreds, and even thousands, within the following decade. With a remarkable display of energy and enterprise, the Russian Jew was ready to grasp the opportunity whenever and wherever it presented itself. No wonder, then, that the professions soon began to feel the effects of

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Price. *The Russian Jew in America* (in Russian). St. Petersburg, 1891.

this influx. The extraordinary profits of the pioneer have vanished. At the same time the necessary increase in the stringency of the laws regulating professional work has very wisely cut off the possibility of entering a profession to many who were unprepared for it.

While the economic significance of the facts passed under review cannot be denied, it is evident that business and professional classes make up only a small percentage of the Russian Jewish population of New York City — much smaller, indeed, than of the German Jews.

The vast majority of the Russian Jews are on a much lower economic level. They belong to the "masses," as against the "classes." The cause will be easily understood if we remember that the average Russian Jewish immigrant brings the magnificent capital of \$8 into this country, while the average non-Jewish immigrant is the happy possessor of double that fortune.

Within these "masses" industrial labor of various kinds is the main source of livelihood. The New York Russian Jew is a wage worker, notwithstanding the numerous exceptions to the rule. The examples of wage-workers of yesterday changing into employers of labor almost over night are many. Lately these examples have been rapidly multiplying with the remarkable changes going on within the clothing industry — a process of decentralization, due to the legislative difficulties put in the way of the domestic system, which was the backbone of the clothing industry some years ago. In 1900, New York state had more than 4,000 establishments for manufacture of clothings, most of them in New York City, and a very large proportion in Russian Jewish hands. Yet the number of these proprietors is insignificant in comparison with more than 100,000 workers in this same industry in the same state. The vast majority of the newcomers also join this industrial army, in this as well as other branches of manufacturing. The question of the economic condition of the Russian Jew in New York is therefore pre-eminently the question of wages, hours, and conditions of labor in general.

The predominance of industrial laborers in a social group that long had the reputation of being fit for commercial life only is striking. The Russian Jews in their own country are largely engaged in commercial occupations into which they were forced many decades ago. It was but natural that the first immigrants of the eighties contin-

ued here in the same channels. Hence the extreme popularity of the peddler's basket, which has helped to support many a hungry family and has laid the foundation for snug little fortunes to be invested in larger ventures. Within the last twenty years the change has been remarkable—in New York and a few other large cities, more than in the rest of the country whither a few Russian Jews have wandered. Ordinary door-to-door peddling has degenerated into begging in its lower forms; in its "higher" form of custom-peddling it approaches a mild form of swindling, and whatever the lucrative properties of the occupation, the social standing of its members is far lower than that of common every-day wage workers.

Whatever we may think of the practical advantages or disadvantages of the concentration of the clothing industry in Jewish hands, its scientific value cannot be denied. Here we have an industry so thoroughly Jewish (in New York) and with the Russian Jew predominating so strongly that the statistical data of the clothing industry cannot but reflect the conditions of the Russian Jewish worker in New York.

The objection may certainly be raised that the data concerning this industry tell us only of that part of the Russian Jewish colony which is employed in tailoring, and this part, no matter how large, is still considerably smaller than the whole. This objection must be sustained if we desire scientific accuracy. But, on the other hand, a tendency toward the leveling of wages in various related industries cannot be denied; the entrance into the tailoring industry is not obstructed by difficulties of a technical or legal nature. It must be admitted, therefore, that there is no economic ground for considering the condition of the Russian Jewish tailor exceptionally high as compared with the worker of the same nationality in other industrial branches. The average earnings of the tailor will be nearer the bottom than the top.

According to the Twelfth Census<sup>1</sup> there have been employed in the various branches of the clothing industry of the United States, over half a million wage earners, more than 30,000 salaried men, in addition to probably more than 50,000 proprietors (though the number is not given of 48,497 establishments). The value of the production

<sup>1</sup> Vol. IX, pp. 259-302.

amounted to \$804,509,370. If we consider the factory production of clothing exclusively, we shall have 205,631 wage earners and products having a value of \$431,881,748. Out of this, New York state shows an enormous share, more than one-half of the total American industry — 90,519 wage workers and \$233,721,653 of products. These figures tell an eloquent story of the magnitude of the commercial interests represented by the Jew, and primarily the Russian Jew.

The statistical data of the clothing industry in the city of New York, especially interests us at this moment. Combining the data for all the clothing industry proper, men's as well as women's, factory work as well as custom work and repairing, we find in New York City<sup>1</sup> 8,266 establishments with a capital of \$78,387,849; 90,950 workingmen; and a value of products of \$239,879,414. So much for the extent of the clothing industry. If we consider that twenty years ago the capital invested in this industry throughout the country was only \$88,068,969, or hardly more than the present share of New York City alone, the results of the industrial activity of the New York Jews will be appreciated.

The following tables will, it is hoped, be found both interesting and instructive:

#### AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES (1900)

	MEN	WOMEN	CHILDREN
American manufactures in general..	\$ 9.82	\$5.46	\$3.04
Men's clothing, factory product.....	11.36	5.08	2.75
Women's clothing, factory product..	12.10	5.86	3.14

We should not trust wage statistics implicitly. Yet if these data, calculated from official tables, mean anything, they indicate that the economic position of the Jewish worker in the clothing trade, while not at the top, is surely not at the bottom of the American working class, as his wages are considerably above the average. Let us continue our investigation a little further, and compare the clothing trade in New York with manufactures in general in the same city.

<sup>1</sup> *Twelfth Census*, Vol. VIII, p. 622.



Taking the average of 264 specified industries in New York,<sup>1</sup> we obtain the following data:

## AVERAGE WAGES, WORKERS IN NEW YORK

	MEN	WOMEN	CHIL- DREN
Manufactures .....	\$12.38	\$6.42	\$3.36
Men's clothing, factory product.....	12.26	6.34	2.94
Womens' clothing, factory product..	12.62	6.86	3.72

Again, this table corroborates the conclusions we reached from the previous figures. The close correspondence of these figures is no mere coincidence. It conclusively shows that the Jewish trades are not below the average even in New York, where wages are higher, because living is dearer and labor better organized than in many other industrial communities.

The foregoing figures are based upon the Federal Census. A study of another authority, the reports of the New York Bureau of Statistics of Labor, seems to lead to different conclusions. In the tables of average wages, which this bureau publishes yearly, the wages in the clothing and tobacco industries appear among the lowest. Mention of this fact is made because the statistics of the Department of Labor are very popular with the New York press. Investigation reveals the fact that only the wages of union trades are here enumerated, *i.e.*, of the best paying, we might say "aristocratic" branches of labor. Of course, the average Jewish workman has not yet reached the standard of the highly paid American union mechanic. But in the vast majority of cases his condition is much above that of the ignorant laborer.

Ordinary observation will corroborate the conclusions drawn from statistical tables. If we disregard for the present the very new arrival, who usually falls into the clutches of the most unscrupulous employer, whether of Jewish faith or any other faith, the condition of the average Jewish tailor is not so hopelessly bad as many pessimists would make us believe. It is undoubtedly better than the condition of those of his brethren whom he leaves behind in the old country. If it were not so we should have no constantly growing stream of immigration. This

<sup>1</sup> *Twelfth Census*, Vol. VIII, pp. 625-28.

is a matter of course. But what is more noteworthy is that his general standard of life is much above that of many other nationalities of the population of New York City. He may not have the taste, the style, the general "*savoir vivre*" so characteristic of the American workman. Not only does he earn less, but his wife has not been instilled with the same training of cleanliness and neatness which characterizes the American women. On the side of expenditure as well as income, the Jewish tailor has much to learn from the American; æsthetically, his home is much below the average American home. On the other hand, he is free in the majority of cases from those faults of wastefulness and dissipation which characterize many Irish, Italian, and sometimes even German workingmen; and his home has many claims to comfort and well-being. The ordinary, busy Jewish tailor keeps a fairly good table, has a parlor with a parlor set of furniture, and is able to indulge in an occasional visit to the Jewish theatre.

The following table will show how prevalent the needle industries are among the Russian Jews in New York:

	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
Dressmakers .....	314	1,948	2,262
Hat and cap makers.....	278	298	576
Milliners .....	68	668	736
Seamstresses .....	1,286	4,021	5,307
Sewing machine operatives.....	—	273	273
Shirt, collar and cuff makers.....	1,043	509	1,552
Tailors .....	20,323	3,304	23,627
Total in needle trades.....	23,312	11,021	34,333
Total in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits .....	44,160	14,362	58,522
Per cent. in needle trades.....	52.8	76.8	58.6

Thus, almost 53 per cent. of male Russian Jewish workers and 77 per cent. female are employed in the needle industries. There are also hundreds of "non-Jewish" trades, in which, nevertheless, scores of Russian Jewish working-men can be found. Such are plumbing, cabinet-making, paper-hanging, mirror-framing, printing, engraving, and many others. As is shown in the above table, however, the majority are still allied to the needle trades, and

it remains true that the needle has saved the Russian Jew in New York. This tendency to enter other industries will be more noticed in the future than in the past. Especially is this true of the second generation, the American born Russian Jews: they are free from those conditions which have forced their parents along narrower lines.

It is hardly necessary to prove that the average wages in these enumerated Jewish trades, with the possible exception of the tobacco industry, are not below the wages in the clothing trades. As a matter of ordinary observation, wages in many of these trades, as well as in some branches of the clothing industry, rise above \$12, and often reach over \$20 per week.

The claim is often made that while the nominal wages of the Jewish tailor in the busy season may be comparatively high, his employment is irregular, and his actual average weekly income is much smaller than would appear at first sight. That there is a great deal of truth in this statement cannot be denied. The needle trades are season trades to a great extent, and, like all other season trades, are subject to great irregularity. While the average employment of the union workers in all trades in the first quarter of 1901 was, according to the New York Bureau of Labor Statistics, 67 days, in the tailoring trades it was 54 days. The difference is not inconsiderable, but is partly compensated for by the rush of work and almost constant overtime during the busy season. The overtime work is interrupted by long breaks, and is usually paid for at a higher rate. The arrangement, however, is one that is by no means conducive to the health of the Jewish worker. The enforcement of the ten-hour day is about as efficient in the case of Jewish union workers as in that of most New York workingmen, with the exception of a few very strong trades, the building trades for example, which have succeeded in reducing it below ten hours, and in keeping it there.

The conclusions to which this necessarily brief statistical study leads are almost too self-evident to require any lengthy discussion. As far as the present condition of the Russian Jew is concerned, we find that in New York, at all events, it is not below par. The same differentiation in economic classes exists in the Russian Jewish colony as in the other elements of the population, it being inevitable in modern society. In the small circle of millionaires, our

Russian brethren may not have their proportionate quota; their middle class, and what is more important, their working class, is certainly not below, and possibly above, the average level economically, especially above the average level of other foreign elements, such as the Italian, the Irish, and the Austrian. This comparatively satisfactory condition is the more remarkable when all the great difficulties which the Russian Jew was forced to overcome are taken into consideration: the poverty of the new arrival, his lack of knowledge of any practical trade, his muscular weakness (as is pointed out by Dr. Fishberg in this volume). These difficulties cannot be denied. But only gross ignorance or inhuman cruelty can hold the Russian Jew responsible for such conditions. History shows that for many centuries the Jews have been forced away from manual labor into commercial life. Yet at the first opportunity, the Russian Jew became a hard and patient industrial worker, and, let us add, an extremely useful worker. The prime object of this work was necessarily the acquisition of means of support. But the very success of the Russian Jew in attaining this object shows that there was a place and demand for his industrial activity. The concentration of the Russian Jewish population in a few industrial centres has long been spoken of as an evident evil; yet this concentration has helped the Russian Jew to a ready sale of his labor, and has saved hundreds of thousands from dependence upon charitable institutions. It is the much abused needle and sewing machine that have solved the problem of how to dispose of swarms of Russian Jewish immigrants. It is the needle that has revolutionized a large and important industry in which hundreds of millions of dollars were invested. It is the needle that has contributed a share toward making this city an important manufacturing centre of the country, and last, but not least, it is this Jewish Russian needle that has made the American nation the best dressed in the world.

It must be acknowledged that after all is said for or against immigration, the fear of the American working class that the immigrant, with his lower standard of life, may reduce American wages, remains the greatest objection, nay, the only objection to immigration which has a certain validity. Now, then, it was to be expected that the Russian Jew should produce such an effect. What did the Russian Jew who immigrated to America in the eighties



and early nineties know of unions and demands for a higher standard? The reader will believe that I have stated strongly the case against the Russian Jewish worker. The more remarkable is the progress the Russian Jewish population has made within the very short period of fifteen or twenty years, the progress which has made the Russian Jew a fighter within the ranks of the American labor movements and a force for the betterment of the American working class.

The report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics for 1902 furnishes the following data as to the membership for the borough of Manhattan in the unions of the clothing and allied trades, that is, those specifically Jewish: Buttonhole makers, 150; cloakmakers (this includes Brooklyn), 8,000; cloth examiners, 86; cloth spongers, 214; clothing cutters, 1,500; coat makers, 4,255; jacket makers, 350; kneepants makers, 2,206; neckwear cutters, 230; overall workers, 49; pants makers, 1,800; pressers, 1,500; tailors, 1,000; vest makers, 1,550; wrapper makers, 839; cloth hat and cap operators, 1,209; shirt cutters, 315; shirt-waist makers, 1,660. This is a total of some 20,000 for the borough of Manhattan. These numbers refer almost exclusively to Jewish workers; there are, besides, many Jewish workingmen members of various other unions. And if we consider that the total membership of unions in the borough is about 150,000, the part Jewish workers play in the union movement will easily be appreciated. It is true, of course, that these unions are far inferior to the oldest American unions in strength, that often they are ephemeral in existence; the very "round" figures of the official statistics are an indication thereof. Frequently they organize for a particular occasion, as a great strike, only to sink almost into nothingness as soon as that particular purpose is accomplished. Their treasuries very seldom, if ever, contain large sums. It is not surprising, then, if the opinion is often expressed that the unions of Jewish tailors exist on paper only. Yet this is far from being the unbiased truth. The teachings of a circle of enthusiastic and energetic people all through the eighties have not fallen on barren ground. There certainly exists collective bargaining in the clothing industry — and that is the most essential feature of unionism. It is sufficient to talk to any clothing manufacturer in New York, and listen to his invocations against

the unions, to be convinced that these unions are a real power.

We agree that the picture drawn above is very optimistic. It is because it is not complete. Not the whole of the New York clothing industry is in such good condition as to its employees, for who has not heard of the New York sweatshops?

Of the horrors of the sweatshops so much has been written and spoken that scarcely an intelligent New Yorker can be found who is not to some degree aware of their evils. Private investigators as well as authoritative official bodies have made thorough studies of the situation. The peculiar conditions of the clothing industry which make home work and the exploitation of ignorant immigrants so easy, have facilitated the establishment of the system. The very "green" immigrant who knows nothing of the conditions of the market is an easy prey to the sharks of his own or any other nationality. The subcontracting system, once established, was a terrible competitor to the legitimate factory.

To a certain extent, this pernicious system was even advantageous to the worker. It supplied him with a source of immediate income almost the day after his arrival; and no matter how small the pay, he looked upon his employer as his benefactor. As the pay was often too small to support the large family even in the poorest style, it became necessary for his wife and children to join in work, and the "benefactor," with his sweatshops, very often an old friend from the old country, provided them all with work. It was fortunate that this system extended only to a few "Jewish" industries and so affected but little the New York workingman in productive employments, or the opposition against the Jewish workers would have been strong, and in a measure justified. The sweatshop is not an exclusively Jewish institution; it has been, and remains, very wide-spread. Italians to a large degree share it.

The sweatshop, with its inevitable trinity of harmful consequences,—low wages, long hours, and female and child labor—remains the essential economic problem of the Russian Jewish population of New York City, as far as any economic problem can be national in so cosmopolitan a city as New York. The Jewish unions have tried to remedy the evil, but the problem has proven too extensive for them. It is evidently a problem for general social interference,

for legislative enactment. Luckily, the sanitary aspects of the system have proven so dangerous that solicitude for social safety has made possible a movement which consideration for the interests of the poor immigrants could never accomplish. The numerous laws against sweatshops enacted of late in New York, as well as in Boston and Philadelphia, though far from being decisive in their influence, have yet had some beneficial result. The movement must grow in force, if the final aim — the transformation of the home industry into a factory system — is to be accomplished. Already the first steps in this direction are to be noticed. Because of the difficulties put in the way of sweatshops, the contract system is giving way in New York to small factories. Home work will have to be fought against, notwithstanding the constitutional difficulties of interfering with the personal liberty of the American sovereign in his castle; it will have to be fought in spite of the resistance of the exploited homeworkers. In a pathetic little story, a talented Yiddish writer wittily describes the objection and fear of a Jewish tailor of a “tyrannical American law which will interfere with an honest Jew working in the evening.” The remoter results of such legislation cannot be appreciated by the lower strata of the working mass. The religious aspect of the question, the necessity of a Sabbath rest, which often drives the old-fashioned Jew from a well regulated factory into a dingy sweatshop, will also command serious attention. Some modification of the strict Sunday laws will probably be found necessary.

The large Russian Jewish population presents, as we have seen, the various elements of social stratification and is not free from any social problem that confronts the great American people. But in the economic field we do not see any specifically Jewish question except those mentioned, whatever the condition of affairs may be in the educational or in the intellectual fields. And as the problems are general, and not specifically Jewish, so the solution must be.

The writer of these lines is conscious, however, of a widespread and very different view. There is a very general cry in certain Jewish quarters, even more than in the non-Jewish ones, that the rapid increase of the Jewish population in New York has given birth to a specific Jewish problem, which is mainly economic, but also moral and intel-



lectual. "The East Side Problem," "The Ghetto Problem" are synonymous terms. The concentration (or congestion, as they prefer to style it) of the Jews in New York as well as the other large cities, is an unmitigated evil as well as an economic mistake. Pathetic descriptions of the dirt, misery and squalor of the Ghetto are commonly associated with this argument. The fact is usually disregarded that there is a great deal more dirt, misery and squalor in Italian, Irish and other kindred "ghettos" of Manhattan Island.

The following few lines are from an authoritative Jewish source:<sup>1</sup>

"The conditions amid which the Jews of the New York Ghetto are compelled to exist are slowly but surely undermining both that moral and physical health of which we have hitherto been so proud. The unspeakable evils that the tenements and the sweatshops as they still persist inevitably produce in the way of depressed vitality, sickness, consequent poverty, and death, are evils that it behooves us to endeavor to kill at the root. . . . Every attempt to improve the tenement house, to remove present residents of the Ghetto to outlying portions of the city, to small towns and rural communities, should receive an earnest help and active co-operation. . . . By its geographical position, the city of New York has peculiar limitations with respect to population which may not be overstepped without a serious menace to the community."

This quotation is typical of the arguments which have found their practical realization in the agitation for removal. As the causes of concentration are pre-eminently economic, so its economic results are of utmost importance. There is a tendency to define these economic results in one short and significant word, "poverty," and removal to other cities is pointed out as a relief. The following statistical data may help us to decide how far the claim is true that poverty is the result of the Russian Jewish congestion in New York, how far the condition of the Jewish worker may be improved by his removal to a small town. Wages being the source of income of the workingman, his prosperity depends financially upon the level of wages:

<sup>1</sup> Lee K. Frankel, *Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the United Hebrew Charities of the City of New York* (1900), pp. 32-34.



*Men's Clothing, Factory Product*

AVERAGE WAGES	MEN	WOMEN	CHILDREN
United States .....	\$11.36	\$5.08	\$2.75
New York City .....	12.26	6.34	2.94
Outside New York City ....	10.70	4.88	2.73

The last two lines indicate the difference in average wages in the tailoring trade in New York and outside New York, and tell a quite eloquent story. The same peculiarity is observed in the women's clothing industry:

*Women's Clothing, Factory Product*

AVERAGE WAGES	MEN	WOMEN	CHILDREN
United States .....	\$12.10	\$5.86	\$3.14
New York City .....	12.62	6.94	3.72
Outside New York City ....	10.62	4.98	2.83

Again:

*Men's Clothing, Factory Product*

AVERAGE WAGES	MEN	WOMEN	CHILDREN
New York City .....	\$12.26	\$6.34	\$2.94
Chicago .....	11.86	6.12	3.40
Philadelphia .....	12.40	6.38	3.67
Other Localities .....	9.98	4.62	2.70

The table does not seem to afford any justification of the claim that to remove the Russian Jew from New York to the smaller towns is to adjust the labor market.

The other great branch of the tailoring industry, women's clothing, shows exactly the same condition of affairs:

*Women's Clothing, Factory Product*

AVERAGE WAGES	MEN	WOMEN	CHILDREN
New York City .....	\$12.62	\$6.86	\$3.72
Chicago .....	13.14	5.12	2.80
Philadelphia .....	10.80	5.16	3.16
Elsewhere .....	10.02	4.90	2.78

Such are the differences in the wage levels between the large and small towns.

It is interesting to study the comparative women's and

children's labor in some of the Jewish trades in New York and elsewhere. The following table shows the smallest proportion of this labor in New York City:

*Percentage of Women's and Children's Labor Combined*

	MEN'S CLOTHING	WOMEN'S CLOTHING
New York City.....	33.6	57.2
Chicago .....	64.2	87.9
Philadelphia .....	35.4	71.1
Elsewhere .....	73.4	85.1

The closest attention of the reader is invited to these tables. They tell at a glance why the Russian Jew prefers at present to stay in New York. Instead of being an economic mistake, it is the result of economic sagacity, unconscious perhaps.

The writer will readily acknowledge that the one-sidedness of the argument leaves it open to serious criticism. He is aware that money wages are often misleading and may not strictly correspond to actual wages, measured in terms of commodities and comforts. Unfortunately a careful search through American statistical literature has failed to disclose information as to retail prices,<sup>1</sup> and the workingmen's budgets, published by the Bureau of Labor do not take the difference between large and small towns into consideration.

It cannot be doubted, however, that lower wages go hand in hand with lower expenditures, for the limited credit of the average workingman does not permit his spending more than he earns. But it is undoubtedly true that the general conviction prevails that living is comparatively cheaper in small towns than in large cities. Let us subject the basis of this conviction to a short analysis.

Food, clothing, and shelter are the three prime channels of expenditure in a workman's family. Food is certainly cheaper in a great many rural and semi-rural communities, where many articles are produced in the neighborhood. With slight exception, however, in rural communities application for industrial energy is not readily found. When we turn to middle-sized cities, where the local supply of vegetable and animal food stuffs is no longer available,

<sup>1</sup> American price statistics deal with wholesale prices and are therefore of little value for the study of expenses of living.

this particular advantage vanishes altogether. Wholesale prices for food stuffs are determined in the world's market and only modified by facilities and expenses of transportation. In determining these expenses mere distances are much less important than geographical position, terminal facilities and other matters, in which large centres like New York possess a great advantage over smaller inland cities. Fresh meat, fruits and vegetables are more easily obtained and cost less in New York than in Washington, Syracuse, Oshkosh, or Kalamazoo. That this is especially true of clothing, dry goods, and the thousand and one products of manufacture, daily used in the home, no one will deny, as the large cities, particularly New York, are centres for the production of these goods.

On the other hand, it is equally true that rents are lower in the smaller cities, or rather that the working people pay less rent in the smaller than in the larger cities. The latter form of the statement is preferred because in the smaller town the working man pays less for a shelter, and may even have more room, but seldom gets the many comforts and improvements that even a tenement home in New York provides. Gas, water, washtubs, sometimes a bathtub, or even hot water,—all these are luxuries in the smaller towns not to be found in many a workingman's home. Though in the final analysis the worker in the small city is favored in the matter of rent, the difference will hardly overbalance the higher prices for clothing, provisions, and many other incidentals of the household.

The conditions of labor will have to change before the Russian Jew will find it advantageous to go further instead of stopping in New York. The general improvement in the conditions of labor in the smaller towns will have to come first. Only when labor legislation shall have accomplished for the smaller towns what labor unions have partially succeeded in accomplishing in New York will the problem assume another aspect.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller discussion of this problem, the reader is referred to the following articles of the author: "Concentration or Removal — Which?" *American Hebrew*, July 17 and 24, 1903, and "Removal! A New Patent Medicine." *Ibid.* September 25, 1903. In the intermediate numbers of this publication, discussions of this point of view may also be found.

## (B) PHILADELPHIA <sup>1</sup>

To analyze the economic and industrial condition of a people is intensely interesting, but it is painful to watch the tense struggle for existence which is going on among the population about to be described. There are, it is true, influences at work which make the struggle hopeful, and which lighten the burden at times, but the strife and the stress are severe. Hardened to suffering, the people push on tenaciously, grimly facing the by-stander, often scoffing at the feeling of pity which may well up in him.

It is my purpose to present a picture of the economic life of the Russian Jews of the city of Philadelphia. A forced immigration covering a period of twenty years is not likely to produce a very settled population, and the picture will therefore show features due to the rapid changes which are going on. All stages of prosperity and lack of prosperity are to be found among the population. On the one side are those who still need the helping hand of the relief and the employment agencies, on the other are those who, arriving here poverty-stricken, have amassed wealth and employ large numbers of persons in their businesses. Between are the struggling masses.

The industries in which the Russian Jewish population are most largely employed may be summed up under the head of needle industries. These include the clothing trade, and the manufacture of cloaks, waists, wrappers, skirts, shirts, overalls, and underwear. In the manufacture of clothing in this city the majority of the employees are Russian Jews.

Some idea of their occupations can be obtained from an examination of the assessors' list of voters in some of the lower wards of the city. Some time ago I counted roughly about 2,000 Jewish voters, and of these fully one-third, about 700, were marked as tailors or as connected with the tailoring trade. Over 300 were entered as merchants and

<sup>1</sup> The writer is indebted to Miss Helen Marot and Miss Caroline L. Pratt for some of the data furnished in reference to the clothing trade.



dealers. Under the euphemistic title of "dealer" are doubtless a large number of peddlers. There were over 100 recorded as clerks and salesmen, 85 as cigar makers, 35 as butchers, 25 as grocers, and the remainder in a variety of occupations. It would serve no purpose to give the details, for, aside from the lack of a system of classification of occupations, one of the last places to go for an accurate statistical record is a Philadelphia assessor's list of voters in a downtown ward—or in many an uptown ward—so that the figures given are not to be regarded as careful statistical estimates, but merely as illustrations of the leading occupations.

An examination of the occupations of the Russian Jewish pupils of three public night schools down town (Fifth and Fitzwater Streets, Third and Catharine Streets, and Sixth and Spruce Streets), one season, revealed the fact that of about 900 young men and 600 young women, fully a third were in the needle industries. It is of interest to note, also, that there were about 50 peddlers and keepers of stands, over 75 newsboys, and some 120 cash, errand, and messenger boys.

In the absence of special skill for particular trades the immigrants have gone into the easily acquired needle industries, in which, with their minute subdivision, a particular occupation can, in many instances, be learned in a few weeks. The immigrant becomes a sweatshop laborer, with all that that implies.

There has been some endeavor to divert the steady stream which leads from the immigrant ship to the sweatshop. Families are at times sent into country towns to labor, and individuals are forwarded into factory towns where they can work under better conditions than are afforded by the over-crowded needle industries in the city. The movement from this city, though small and slow, is nevertheless encouraging.

The schools of the Hebrew Education Society are another example of an endeavor to remove the economic clog, and to turn the immigrants into the direction of skilled industries. Hundreds of graduates from this school can testify to the effort in the direction of industrial education. Cigar making and clothing cutting for young men, millinery and dress making for young women, are taught in this school.

The results are comparatively small, however. The

problem of the congested needle industries is but little affected by such efforts, when the condition of the thousands in these trades is considered.

I have no means of determining with any degree of accuracy the number of Russian Jews in this city in the various trades. There is enough evidence from different sides to show beyond a doubt that the needle workers are by far predominant in numbers, and from examination of the factory inspectors' reports and personal inquiry of leading workers, I think an estimate of 10,000 as aggregating the total number would not be an exaggeration. In the various branches of the cigar trade there are about 1,000 employed. There are between 500 and 1,000 peddlers and keepers of stands, the number varying according to the season of the year. Factory workmen, shop keepers of various kinds, clerks and salesmen, girls in cigar, cigarette, and other factories, in shops and in stores, make up the bulk of the remainder of the population. Then there are the workmen in the ordinary vocations which every population affords, and finally, the professional class. There are a number of young men studying for the professions, so that within the near future the list of the latter will be largely increased.

A survey of the section in which the Russian Jewish people reside reveals, on the outside, far less evidence of the presence of the sweatshops and their workers than one would imagine from reading lurid newspaper descriptions. But this will not seem so strange when it is understood that much of the work of the needle industries is done in the homes,—and some of the worst results, both from the economic and the sanitary standpoints, are in consequence of home work,—and that there is no attempt to display large signs advertising the business, as would be the case with factories and mills of other industries and in other districts. One must often sedulously seek the shops in order to find them.

It is significant that in the reports of the factory inspectors all the shops with which we are dealing are designated as sweatshops; garment and cigar factories are all under this head, and it is only in the details of the reports that a distinction is made as to the sanitary condition being good, fair, or bad.

We enter a sweatshop on Lombard, Bainbridge, Monroe or South Fourth Street. It may be on one of several floors

in which similar work is going on. The shop is that of the so-called contractor — one who contracts with the manufacturer to put his garments together after they have been cut by the cutter. The pieces are taken in bundles from the manufacturer's to the contractor's. Each contractor usually undertakes the completion of one sort — pants, coats, vests, knee pants, or children's jackets. There is probably one whole floor devoted to the making of this one kind of garment. It may be that two contractors divide the space of a floor, the one, perhaps, being a pants contractor, and the other a vest contractor, with an entirely distinct set of employees. To his employees the contractor is the "boss," as you find out when you inquire at the shop. Before you have reached the shop, you have probably climbed one, two, or three flights of stairs, littered with *débris*. You readily recognize the entrance to one of these shops once inside the building. The room is likely to be ill-smelling and badly ventilated: the workers are afraid of draughts. Consequently, an abnormally bad air is breathed which it is difficult for the ordinary person to stand long. Thus result the tubercular and other diseases which the immigrant acquires in his endeavor to work out his economic existence.

There are the operator at the machine, the presser at the ironing table, the baster and the finisher with their needles — the latter young women — all bending their backs and straining their eyes over the garments the people wear, many working long hours in busy season for a compensation that hardly enables them to live, and in dull season, not knowing how they will get along at all.

If we apply our ordinary standards of sanitation to these shops they certainly come below such standards. By frequent visits we may grow accustomed to the sights and smells, and perhaps unconsciously assume that such shops must in the nature of things be in bad condition. But a little reflection will readily show the error of such an assumption.

It is all the more harrowing that the workers have a tenacity of life due to a rich inheritance of vitality, and that through sickness and disease, through squalor and filth, they proceed onward, often managing to pull themselves out of the economic slough, though retaining, perhaps, the defects of bad physical development and surroundings.



But there is a larger social question involved. The community at large incurs a danger through the germs of disease which a dirty shop may spread in the garments it turns out. And so the government steps in to inspect the shops, supposedly requiring them to conform to certain sanitary regulations, both because of the health of the employees and of the community generally. But, as a matter of fact, most of the contractors' shops that I visited are really not good places to work in. The best result of inspecting them by the government inspector would be to "inspect" them out of existence. But the law and the human instruments of the law are not strong enough for that. The inspection force is ludicrously inadequate for the large number of places to be looked after, so that, with the best intentions, the inspectors must feel themselves helpless. The law, as it reads, would seem to be stringent enough. It requires that before work of the kind under consideration can go on in a place, the employer must have a permit from the inspector "stating the maximum number of persons allowed to be employed therein and that the building, or part of building, intended to be used for such work or business is thoroughly clean, sanitary and fit for occupancy for such work or business." Not less than 250 cubic feet of air space are to be allowed for each person, and "there shall be sufficient means of ventilation provided in each workroom." Manufacturers are required to have the permit produced before giving work to a contractor. There is a penalty attached to working without such permit. The manufacturer shields himself behind the permit issued to the contractor. The contractor likewise. As ever, form without spirit is deadening, and so the conscience of the community must be more thoroughly aroused before there is a real remedy of the conditions. We have here another illustration of how politics, which is satisfied with putting laws on the statute books and executing them through inadequate agencies appointed through the usual influences, menaces the health and economic condition of a community, failing to realize the larger purpose which would compel an intelligent carrying out of the law, or a clear demonstration of its failure if it is inadequate.

It should be added, by way of information, that besides the Russian Jews the largest other element in the needle industries referred to is the Italian; and certain lines of



goods made by Jews are sometimes handed over to Italians for finishing.

The shops are chiefly conducted by the contractors, entirely independent of the manufacturers, and the various manufacturers for whom they work assume no liability with reference to them or their employees. They merely agree to pay so much per piece for the garments they give out, and expect the garments to be returned to their establishments as agreed upon by the contractors. Few in this city have "inside" shops, that is, shops in which the entire garment is completed inside the establishment, or in a separate building, under their own supervision. Wherever these inside shops have been established the conditions are very much better; the shop is much cleaner, the light good, the air bearable, and the compensation usually more steady.

The last statement requires elucidation. In one clothing manufacturing establishment, there is in the rear a so-called inside shop with a regular contractor in charge. The firm furnishes its first work to this contractor and thus enables him to give, in turn, steady employment, but claims it could not extend such a shop without adding considerably to the expense, as the rental and the assurance of regularity involve a larger outlay than arranging with contractors who compete on the basis of low rentals and the smallest possible expense.

Another firm has some of its high-grade work completed by inside hands, and here, too, the conditions are good, being more akin to the inside shops of the cloak trade.

One establishment for the manufacture of uniforms has a large building as an inside shop, devoted to the completion of the garments as they come from the hands of the cutters. Here were "sets" of workers (a "set" is usually an operator, a presser, and a finisher) who agreed to complete a garment for a certain gross sum, dividing the receipts according to a pro rata agreement, one of them being responsible for the work. The light and air were good, and the workers had the use of electric motor power.

In this connection, it should be noted with congratulation that one of the largest clothing firms has a factory in the southern section of the city that utilizes the services of about a thousand employees, who come more immediately under the supervision of the manufacturer. This will do away with a small body of contractors and their shops, and with many evil features consequent upon their maintenance.

An analysis of the wages of the employees in the various divisions of the garment industry collected chiefly in 1901 follows:

Through the kindness of one of the large trouser contractors, I am enabled to state exactly the amount which each class of worker in his shop received in a year's time ending in the spring of 1901. But the amounts thus paid out, it should be borne in mind, are of the highest range, inasmuch as this contractor had work during the entire year, whereas the usual employment in the contractors' shops during the same period did not equal more than about 28 full weeks' work. It has been calculated that for the year in question the amount of work which was available for the average worker did not amount to more than about what would be equal to 28 weeks' full time. That is to say, there might be employment for some period for every working day of the week, and for other periods for a smaller number of days per week and but for a partial number of hours per day, and sometimes practically no work.

We have here, too, an estimate as to what one of the fastest operators in the city can earn. He was employed at his trade 39 weeks, having been in some other employment during 13 weeks of the year given. He worked on 4171 pairs of trousers in that time, or an average of 108 per week, and received during the period \$543.25, or an average of \$13.93 per week, being equal to 13 cents per pair. In the same shop a second operator, working 52 weeks in the year on 4,680 pairs of trousers, or 90 pairs per week, received \$590.55, which is an average of \$11.36 per week, not quite 13 cents per pair. A third, working 42 weeks on 3,504 pairs, received \$509.59, or an average of 83 pairs, at \$12.13 per week. Though his average per week is higher than the one before, he is not as well off for the year.

Records from trouser operators in other shops show that the average earnings per year were considerably below this owing to but partial employment. Payment is by the piece, from 10 to 12½ cents being a fair average price. A full week's work will see the completion of perhaps 80 pairs. The average workman will receive at the end of the week, in full time, therefore, about \$10. As the year's work (up to the spring of 1901) did not amount to more than 28 weeks, the yearly earnings were not more than about \$280, or an average of about \$5.40 in the week.

A vest operator is paid about 9 cents per garment. He

can complete about 120 per week, which at \$10.80 for 28 weeks would make about \$300 per year. Statements from operators in various shops show that with a full week's work they earn about this sum, some of the best earning a little more. But, as the year's work amounted to only 28 weeks, the earnings per year would be about \$300 a year, or an average of about \$6 per week.

The results as to coat operators were about the same. They earned from \$15 to \$18 per week, but had not more than about 20 weeks' work, so that their earnings were from \$300 to \$360 per year, or an average of not much more than \$6 per week.

In children's jackets, the earnings were from \$4 to \$12 a week; a year's work was equal to 30 weeks, making from \$120 to \$360 per year, or an average of from \$2.30 to \$6.90 per week. The average payment would equal about \$5 per week.

In knee pants, the earnings for operators were from \$9 to \$10 in a full week. The number of weeks' employment was about 25, and the earnings per year were from \$200 to \$250, an average of from \$4 to \$5 per week.

Proceeding in the same way with reference to pressers, we have our trouser contractor's record of \$1,265.77 paid out to three pressers in 43 weeks, or an average of \$9.81 for each man, and \$330.44 paid out to four pressers in the remaining 9 weeks of the year, or an average of \$9.18 per man. This, be it remembered, is for the exceptional shop with full employment the year round. Returns from interviewing men in other shops showed earnings of from \$5 to \$10, or \$12 in a full week. With 28 weeks' work in the year the earnings for the year would be from \$140 to \$336. The average was about midway between these figures, or \$4.50 per week.

Vest pressers averaged about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents per garment and complete about 300 in a week, which is equal to \$10.50, and for a year of 28 weeks averaged a little over \$300. Actual records from vest shops showed earnings for pressers of from \$9 to \$14, which, with 28 weeks' actual work, would make the average about \$300 per year, or \$6 per week.

The earnings of coat pressers were about on a par with those of the vest pressers, averaging not more than \$300 per year, or \$6 per week.

Those on the children's jackets trade earned between \$200 and \$300 per year, or an average of from \$4 to \$6 per week.



Knee pants pressers earned from \$150 to \$200 per year, or from \$3 to \$4 per week, on the average.

The trouser baster of the same contractor from whom data as to other employees were obtained received in a year \$287.91, or an average of \$5.54 per week. He had practically full work the year round. Assuming the work for the usual baster in a shop to have been equal to 28 weeks, the pay on the average, for the year, would not have been more than about \$170, or a little over \$3 per week.

For vest basters, the average from a number of shops showed about the same result as for the trouser baster — from \$150 to \$200 per year, or a weekly average of between \$3 and \$4.

Among the coat basters, earnings were higher. The men who do the basting are the chief mechanics on the garment. Some earned as much at \$350, but the average for the majority was about \$300, which is approximately equal to a weekly average of \$6.

On children's jackets, basters and fitters earned from \$250 to \$300 per year, or an average of from \$5 to \$6 per week.

Coming now to finishers — who are young women — our trouser contractor's returns on which we have drawn before showed the following payments respectively to three finishers whom he employed the whole year: \$220.99, or an average of \$4.25 per week; \$215.95, or an average of \$4.15 per week; \$205.25, or an average of \$3.97 per week. The ordinary finisher, however, having but 28 weeks' work, would earn not more than \$100, \$125 or \$150 per year, or between \$2 and \$3 per week, on the average.

Average returns from vest shops showed earnings of about \$150 per year, equaling \$3 per week. There were a few who earned higher wages.

An average calculation based on returns from coat shops showed practically the same result — not more than \$150 per year, or \$3 per week.

The same is the case among the children's jacket workers.

In all these instances, it should be noted, that in a full week individual earnings may be higher, but when computed for the year the average worker's earnings will not be above the sums indicated.

We have presented the earning capacity of the chief classes of piece workers in the clothing trade. There are, however, other employees, paid usually by the week, and



there are, of course, other outlays on the part of the contractor.

Viewing the subject now from the standpoint of the contractor, let us estimate the cost of the garments to him, and his net gain. Taking the figures of our standard trouser contractor, we find that he made 21,157 pairs in the year, or an average of 407 pairs per week, and that his payments per pair averaged as follows: Operating, 12.9 cents; pressing, 7.5 cents; finishing, 6.6 cents; tacking and button holing, 2.2 cents; basting, 1.3 cents. Adding to these items his estimate of 2 cents for shop expenses, including rent, coal and gas, and 1 cent for errand and delivery service, we have a total of 33½ cents. He received from the manufacturer between 35 and 40 cents per pair, according to the nature of the garment. Assuming an average of 37½ cents, his profit was 4 cents per pair, making more than \$800 per year, or some \$16 per week.

Another trouser contractor paid out 20 cents per garment for operating, basting, finishing and tacking. He received from 32 to 35 cents. He could turn out about 250 per week. Taking an average, the \$33.75 per week is subject to a deduction of \$3.50 for rent and other expenses, leaving slightly over \$30 per week, which, on the basis of 28 weeks' work would be \$840 per year, or an average earning of about \$16 per week.

Similarly, let us accept the following calculation by a vest contractor of the cost to him of a garment: Foreman, 4 cents; operator, 15 cents; baster, 10 cents; hand button-hole maker, 15 cents; finisher, 3 cents; presser, 4 cents; errand boy, 4 cents; total 56 cents. He received 60 cents from the manufacturer. He could turn out about 800 vests in a week. To his expenditures are to be added rent, fuel and light. His net earnings in a full week were, perhaps, \$25. But if he has but 28 weeks' work in a year the total would be not more than about \$700, or an average of \$14 per week. This corresponds fairly well with the statement of another vest contractor that net earnings would be from \$13 to \$18 per week. A third vest contractor who paid an average of 23 cents per garment to his operator, baster, finisher, and presser, and who could turn out about 600 garments in a week, received 27½ cents for them. From the average of \$25 per week there must be deducted rental (\$13 per month) and other expenses, leaving, possibly, \$20 earnings

for a full week; \$560 for a year, on a basis of 28 weeks, or an average of \$11 per week.

The contractor is usually an operator or other worker who becomes imbued with the desire to set up for himself. Excessive competition among the small contractors has contributed to the bad economic state of affairs in the garment trades. The contractor is between the upper mill-stone of the manufacturer and the nether mill-stone of the workman, forced to take the prices of the one and trying to make the utmost possible out of the other. Some few have saved enough to become manufacturers themselves. Some of the old established manufacturing firms have retired from business as the result of the competition of this new element.

In actual money gains, the contractors whose earnings have been estimated are better off than their workmen. Many said that if they could get their little capital back they would probably return to their former occupation — at least for a time, for the desire to be a "boss" is strong and would doubtless lead to other attempts.

In the cloak trades we find a somewhat better state of affairs than in the clothing. The shop is part of the plant of the manufacturer himself and under his direct surveillance. Besides being well lighted and ventilated the shops have machine power. There is in this trade comparatively little work given out to contractors, though there is some, especially in busy seasons.

An operator on first class ladies' cloaks and suits earns about \$30 in a full week's time, and as there is about half year's work in a year, his earnings are about \$750 per year, or an average of \$20 per week.

A presser on first class work averages about \$18 per week a full week, but as the work in a year is not more than about two-thirds time, the earnings are about \$700 per year, a weekly average of \$14.

Finishers (girls) average about \$8, in a full week, have about 30 weeks' work and, therefore, earn about \$240 per year.

In the clothing trade the yearly earnings ranged from \$125 for finishers (who are young women), to \$360 for operators, with \$300 as the average for the majority, between these being the basters at \$175, and the pressers at \$250.

In the cloak trade, the conditions, as has been noted, are

better not only with respect to the physical but the economic status as well.

The condition of the cigar makers is much better, on the whole, than that of the workers in the needle industries. Earnings of between \$500 and \$600 per year, or an average of from \$10 to \$12 per week, would be a fair estimate.

The people are branching out into various trades, but there are none which employ such large numbers or in which the conditions are peculiar, so as to call for specific mention.

Peddling is an occupation into which new immigrants easily enter. Many earn a very precarious livelihood. Some develop into retail tradesmen.

A noticeable tendency to go into the profession of medicine is to be observed. Many a Russian Jew with intellectual ability will be laying plans to go from the shop into medical practice. Law, dentistry and pharmacy are the other favorite professions.

Some of the Russian Jewish people are rising to comfortable positions in the professions and commerce. Among the employers of labor there are several doing thousands of dollars' worth of business yearly. There are merchants and manufacturers, some who still live in the southern section of the city, others who have moved up town, among the prosperous elements of the community. Economically, they can, of course, now take care of themselves, but their rise upwards has often been severe and hazardous.

Real estate purchases are a growing element in the economic progress of the population; many a comfortable sum is made through their means.

Some of the bank accounts would astonish the unknowing. So, too, the growing number of those who become insured is indicative of foresightedness and prosperity. One Russian Jewish insurance agent in the down-town district has a number of insured which would surprise those who know merely the outward aspects of the district.

From our examination of the conditions of the needle industries, the keen and difficult struggle that is going on among the masses is readily seen. Many an one used to a well-to-do existence can hardly conceive how some of the men get along on their slender incomes, for they often must support a large family. Instances are familiar in which a worker has a whole bevy of children, all too young to assist

in meeting the wants of a family, and the wife with her hands full looking after the needs of the little ones.

In busy season the employees are required to work long hours, sometimes as high as fifteen, perhaps eighteen, a day. In slack season they must wait for the work that is doled out to them. Where time enters at all into the measurement of the pay, the employers endeavor to stretch it without giving corresponding pay. There seem to be numerous devices by which the workers can be taken advantage of. The character of the work varies so much in any one trade that it seems difficult to regulate the prices unless by the most iron-clad arrangement, backed by the force of strong organization. But the weakness of the organizations has been apparent in the past. Sometimes they have been affiliated with one general labor organization, sometimes with another. They are now welded together under the United Garment Workers of America, into which they have gone during the past few years. With the exception of the Cutters' Union the membership of these organizations is almost entirely composed of Russian Jews.

The competition of unorganized labor, especially of women and of people in the country towns, makes the regulation of the trade exceedingly difficult, and tends, of course, to the aggravation of the conditions regarding hours and wages.

Surveying the entire field, emphasis has been laid on the conditions in the needle industries, because of their importance as to the numbers dependent upon them and their peculiar economic arrangements. The displacement of the outside shops alleviates the sanitary and economic conditions. Many of the contractors, as foremen or superintendents, are enabled to earn as much in wages as they formerly did in a mad endeavor to obtain profits; and their competition for prices being removed, there is a steadier regulation as between the workers and the manufacturers. Factories as part of the plant of the manufacturers, with control by them, assisted by government inspection, and the abrogation of the contractors' shops, enable a better regulation of hours and wages.

We have, then, a population of much intellectual and moral strength capable of large economic advance, requiring better physical influences and checks on individualistic tendencies.



## (C) CHICAGO

Probably among no nationality does the economic condition change more rapidly than among the Russian Jewish people in the United States. The transition period from the junk peddler to the iron yard owner, from the dry goods peddler to the retail or wholesale dry goods merchant, from the cloak maker to the cloak manufacturer, is comparatively short. True, the same causes which influence trade and industry in the economic world about them also influence this population, yet they seem able to develop business methods of their own, which, in many instances, successfully defy or modify well established economic laws. They can do business with little money, or practically no money, right next door to a large house, ignoring the economic rule that the latter, through competition, drives the smaller house out of business. They continue to hold their own in the trades in which they engage, growing in strength as the years go on.

"A Jew would rather earn five dollars a week doing business for himself than ten dollars a week working for some one else," was the observation of an Irishman who worked in the same factory with me. This idea is held quite extensively among the Russian Jewish people, as my own experience among them will confirm. Quite a large proportion of the men who worked with me in the same trade ten or fifteen years ago are now in business for themselves or have entered professional life. Others have become salesmen, traveling men, commission agents, insurance agents, and the like. I have met very few wage-workers among Russian Jewish people who regard it as their permanent lot in life to remain in the condition of laborers for wage. Almost all are bending their energies to get into business or to acquire an education so that they may fit themselves for some other calling than that of the wage-worker of the ordinary kind. More of our boys and girls who have attended the public schools enter stores and offices than shops and factories. This is especially true of the

more intelligent of the population. Among those who stay in the shops as workmen there is a tendency to leave employments which require hard labor.

Scattered through the industries in this large city, Russian Jewish people are to be found in a large variety of occupations, from the common laborers to the highly skilled mechanics. I find them employed as iron molders, machinists, locomotive engineers, sailors, farm helpers, boiler makers, butchers at the stock yards, street sweepers, section hands on railroads, motormen and conductors on the street cars; a number as building laborers—brick layers, carpenters, steam fitters, plumbers; in bicycle plating shops; in manufactories of electrical appliances, of iron beds and springs, of shoes, of wood work, and of upholstery; in tin, mattress and picture frame factories; and in bakeries. But the industries in which they are employed in the greatest numbers are the sewing and cigar trades.

I gather from my connection with the trade union movement and from my observation while inspecting factories for the state of Illinois for four years, that the Russian Jewish people in Chicago have not nearly so great an influence on the sewing and cigar trades as in the east, particularly in New York. There are eight non-Jews to one Jew employed in the needle industries in Chicago. The proportion of non-Jews to Jews among the cigar makers is not quite so large. It can only be said, therefore, that the Russian Jews are an important factor in these trades. Among the mattress makers, too, concerning trade regulations, they must be regarded as an element to be reckoned with.

The sanitary condition of the streets, homes, and shops in the Jewish settlement proper is rather bad. It does not compare favorably with that of the other nationalities, except the Italian and the Polish, which in some respects are worse. The streets and homes of the Italians are somewhat dirtier, and the Polish crowd their people in the shops and homes more than the Jews. Compared with the Germans, the Scandinavians, and the Bohemians, the Russian Jews make a poor showing, their places of abode and of work being dirtier and more crowded. However, a change for the better is taking place, at least in respect to the sanitary condition of the shops. Separate buildings are being erected, so that before many years we shall have outgrown many abuses as to sanitation. I have known many men to

be willing to work for smaller wages in better quarters. A busy season with good wages tends to improve the sanitary condition, whereas dull times and small wages have a contrary effect.

Probably nowhere is the peculiar character of the Russian Jewish people better to be seen than in the trade union movement, or rather, in the absence of this movement. One cannot ascribe the condition of the trade unions among them solely to their racial character, as many other factors help to form their economic status and its relations to labor organizations. The nature of the trades in which they are engaged and the helplessness of the majority of the people are among the factors affecting the situation.

One of the main reasons why they do not support trade unions and labor organizations to the same extent as other nationalities seems to be that most of them do not believe themselves to be working men for life, nor do they think that they will leave as a heritage to their children the lot of a wage-worker. A very large number speculate on the notion of opening, in course of time, a shop for themselves, or going into business of some kind, or educating themselves out of the condition of the working classes. A large part of the tolerance of low wages, long hours of work, and insanitary condition of the shops, that is, of the tragedy of economic servitude, of poverty, and of suffering, is to be ascribed to this state of mind.

Of other elements that interfere with the chances of effective organization, the fact that in the sewing trade women can and do replace men must be considered. Especially during strikes have they taken the place of men in a large number of cases, and have thrown Jewish men and women out of employment. The trades in which the Russian Jews are largely engaged are easily learned, especially by women and children, so that there is a constant recruiting of newcomers of all nationalities, thus overstocking the trades with labor.

Generally speaking, the sewing trades in this city are in a deplorable state. There is little organization among the workmen. The reason for this among the Jewish people is not the same as among other nationalities. With the Poles and some of the Germans and Bohemians, the church and the priests are factors in keeping them in an ignorant, helpless, and "scabbing" state of mind, but the Jewish people are clever and quite well informed, so that the cause

has been not ignorance but unwillingness to make the sacrifice necessary to bring about successful organization. There is, however, some change for the better in progress. They are beginning to realize, slowly, but surely, that their hope economically, lies in alliance with the labor unions and the socialist movement, and they will become a factor, I believe, in establishing the state of affairs in which labor will be free and receive what it produces.

It should be noted, too, in modification of the general statement as to unwillingness to organize: First, that during actual strikes Jews have been much more loyal and self sacrificing than other nationalities. I know of many men, who, during strikes, with no bread for themselves or their families, attended meetings and insisted on holding out until the strike was won. Second, a large number are in unions of their trades, and many are active in leadership. Third, in the socialist movement, a few have been very active and have carried on propaganda at a great sacrifice.

In all there are probably 4,000 Russian Jews engaged in the sewing trades in Chicago, less than one-eighth of the total. The majority of men employees have an income of from \$400 to \$600 per year. Several hundred Russian Jews are either contractors or manufacturers. The Jewish contractor who employs Jewish help is not so prosperous, as a rule, as his neighbor, the Jewish contractor who employs Gentile help, or the Gentile contractor. The reason seems to be that among the Poles and Bohemians, of whom there are many in these trades, women and children are employed to a much greater extent than among the Jews, and one cannot get adult males to work as cheaply as women and children. A number of Jewish contractors have moved into neighborhoods where they are enabled to employ Polish, German, and Bohemian women and children, and they are prospering. But those who are in the First Ward, or in the Jewish district, are simply making a living a little better than their employees.

About 1,500 of those in the sewing trades are engaged in "country order" coat making, a cheaper grade of custom coat making. The work is done according to the factory system of division of labor, as distinguished from custom work, in which the tailor makes the whole garment. During the past three years, the employees have had work from six to nine months in the year. They have earned



about the following wages. Operators from \$11 to \$25 per week; helpers (to operators), from \$5 to \$12 per week; basters, from \$10 to \$18 per week; helpers (to basters), from \$5 to \$10 per week; pressers, from \$10 to \$18 per week; helpers (to pressers), from \$4 to \$8 per week. The high priced men are about as one to four in a shop. The cutters in this trade receive about \$15 to \$18 per week, and the designers and foremen from \$30 to \$40 per week. There is no union in the trade, excepting a small mutual benefit society. This trade competes successfully, I think, with the country merchant tailoring and with ready-made manufacture of clothing. During busy season the hours are long, as high as twelve and thirteen hours a day. The work is mostly piece work. This and cloak making are considered the best of the sewing trades. Polish and Bohemian women and children compete as workers, but the Jewish men are holding their own as yet, because they can adjust themselves better to the seasons of the trade.

It should be borne in mind that the rates of payment here given are for a full week's work. Therefore an operator who earns \$11 in a full week will not earn more than between \$300 and \$350 in a year or an average of between \$6 and \$7 per week. The same applies to the other classes of workmen, so that the average weekly wages are much lower than would appear on the face of things.

The next division is the ready-made coat making trade. In the past few years the Jews have been replaced by Poles and Bohemians, so that there are not more than about 300 of the former. There were formerly about 1,000. Their wages are considerably less than those of the "country order" division, operators being paid from \$10 to \$15 per week, basters from \$9 to \$13 per week, pressers the same as basters, helpers ranging from \$4 to \$9 per week, hand sewers from \$2 to \$8 per week. There are about nine or ten months' work in a year. An operator earns, therefore, about \$400 per year on the average, which is equal to \$8 per week. The average weekly earnings for the other workmen are subject to a corresponding reduction.

Both in the ready-made and in the country order, the machines are run by foot power. The shops, as a rule, are not in very good condition.

About 200 Russian Jews are employed as custom coat makers proper, working for merchant tailors. They make

the whole garment. Their earnings are from \$12 to \$18 per week and they work about nine months a year.

These and workers in the country order division often become small merchant tailors, both in Chicago and in the country towns. Some have become well-to-do. Among them are merchant tailors in prominent sections of the city worth from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

There are about 250 Russian Jews among the ladies' tailors, making both suits and outer garments to measure. The operators earn from \$15 to \$20 per week and have from six to nine months' work in the year. The yearly earnings are, therefore, from \$400 to \$700, or an average of from \$8 to \$14 per week. A large number keep shops for themselves and are doing a good business. One has acquired about \$20,000 worth of property during the past eight years. The foremen, designers, and cutters in this trade receive about \$30 per week.

Ladies' cloaks and suit making is quite a large industry among the population we are describing. About 800 are employed in it. This is a season trade, with good wages in the busy season and very low wages in the dull season. In the cheaper and partly in the medium grades of this business, the Jews have lost their hold during the last few years. This is due to the establishment of shops employing girls, among the Polish and Bohemian people. In the better grades they still hold on. In these, during the busy season, they earn from \$12 to \$25 a week, in slack season from \$9 to \$14 a week, working mostly ten hours per day. There is about eight months' work.

Steam is being introduced in place of foot power, so that if the Jewish people are not replaced by women this trade seems likely to offer them a decent livelihood. Women earn from \$4 to \$9 per week. It should be noted, too, that competition with New York affects this trade.

No trade requires the influence of a labor organization more than this. The cloak makers lost a severely contested strike several years ago and they do not seem to have been able to organize themselves since that time. There are about 50 Russian Jewish cloak cutters who are paid about \$18 per week. A number of the designers are from this population. Their wages are \$50 a week and upwards. Some of the Russian Jewish people have gone into the manufacture of cloaks on a small scale. The wealthiest is worth probably \$10,000.

The cap makers are doing fairly well. They earn from \$9 to \$18 per week. They seem to have withstood the competition of women. When they have saved from \$200 to \$300 they open shops of their own. There are about 200 employers. The wealthiest is worth in the neighborhood of \$10,000.

The children's coats, the men's trousers, the knee pants, the overalls, and the shirt trades seem to be the poorest the population are engaged in. Operators in these trades earn from \$5 to \$11 per week, with about nine months' work throughout the year; girls (helpers) from \$2 to \$5 per week; pressers from \$5 to \$9 per week, working about the same time.

Most of the contractors who employ Jewish help are poor men themselves. Two or three who employ Polish girls have made enough money to earn their homes and shops. Those who have gone into the business of manufacturing knee pants, pants, overalls, and children's clothing have, in a number of cases, done better. The wealthiest is probably worth about \$10,000. Altogether, there are about 400 Russian Jews in these trades.

Furriers are earning from \$12 to \$18 per week and work about nine months in the year. There are about 50 Russian Jews among them.

To summarize the history of the trade union movement in the foregoing trades: The cloak makers had an organization ten years, disbanded, and reorganized. They had a number of strikes. The influence of the union on the trade was beneficial. From 1881 to 1889, the workers were employed from twelve to sixteen hours per day. The union and the strikes brought down the working day to nine or ten hours. Wages are better than they were in those years.

The cloak makers' union was the first to have a public meeting to protest against sweatshops and the employment of children, and together with the central labor organization, Mrs. Florence Kelley and residents of Hull House, succeeded in having a law passed prohibiting the employment of children under fourteen years of age, and the employment at trade in one's own home of persons other than members of the family.

The coat makers had an organization which was helpful in the improvement of their economic condition, but a lost strike broke them up. Bohemians, Germans, and Jews were organized in the trade. Through a lock-out of



the clothing cutters, in 1897, the unions were forced out on strike, and after six weeks were defeated by the manufacturers, who were able to replace the men by women's labor, half-Americanized, and newly-arrived foreign labor.

Knee pants makers, pants makers and children's coat makers were also organized, and their organizations were rendered useless through similar agencies.

In the cigar and tobacco trades, there are in this city about 2,400 Russian Jews. A fair proportion are in business for themselves, as store keepers or manufacturers or both. About 1,500 men and 500 women cigar makers earn from \$300 to \$600 per year. A large number who work in the heart of the Jewish district earn only about \$300 to \$400. Persons learning the trade earn \$3, \$4 and \$5 a week. There is employment about nine months in the year. During the crisis from 1893 to 1897 there was work for not more than four or five months in the year, and the wages were lower per week.

There are a comparatively small number of Russian Jewish workers in the cigarmakers' union, about 200 out of a total membership of 1,800. One reason is that the cigars made in the Jewish district are of a cheaper grade than is provided for in the union scale. Then, too, in the large cigar factories, which do not employ union help, they work with other nationalities. The difference between the union price and the factory price is large, from \$3 to \$7 per thousand. The union has had several strikes in these factories and has lost each time. Most of the cigars in Chicago are made in the large factories. Employment in the factories is steadier than in the small union shops. The union keeps its wages for labor so high because there is a large demand for the union label. One of the reasons why the price of labor in the non-union shops is so low is because the trade is comparatively easy to learn, and women and children can take the place of men.

Probably the wealthiest Russian Jewish cigar manufacturer is worth about \$20,000, and from this one they run down to the man who keeps shop at night and works in a factory during the day, or for whom the wife keeps a little store while he works out.

The business of manufacturing cigarettes and smoking tobacco employs about 200 Russian Jews. The workers barely make a living. Men earn from \$7 to \$12 a week;



girls from \$4 to \$8. The employers are only moderately thriving, as the revenue and municipal taxes heavily affect their incomes.

There are about 80 Russian Jewish mattress makers. They earn: men from \$9 to \$14; women, from \$4 to \$8 per week. Jews have displaced other nationalities in this trade, mainly the Irish. They were organized with other nationalities in a union. A union label was introduced, wages were raised, and the union was maintained for three years. Then, through the machinations of some of the employers, the union was split and two organizations were formed, one composed of Jews and one of non-Jews. The Jewish union joined hands with the employers and formed what was really a "scab" organization.

The Russian Jewish bakers number about 50 in all. They work unreasonably long hours for very small wages — about \$5 to \$13 a week — in very bad bake-shops. They established a union several times, but were disorganized for a reason similar to the one just described: Jewish employers introduced non-Jews and kept the good union men out of work for a long time.

From 400 to 600 are in the picture frame, tin can, and bicycle factories. They earn from \$7 to \$15 a week and assimilate quite rapidly with other nationalities in the trades. Some of the large picture frame factories and quite a number of picture frame stores are owned by Russian Jews. It is said some of the owners are worth \$100,000.

In the professions, there are a number of physicians, dentists, lawyers and teachers.

There are also mail carriers, post-office clerks, and holders of office under the state and city governments.

Perhaps from 2,500 to 3,000 are clerks in stores and offices, book-keepers, stock keepers and in kindred occupations, ranging from the lowest paid shipping clerk to the high-salaried department store manager. One is supposed to attain business training in the stores and offices, and there is a tendency to overstock this class of help, so the good salesman or good book-keeper is likely to receive a smaller salary than an experienced mechanic or worker at a trade.

Among the peddlers and small store-keepers, the rag peddlers form the largest group. Most of them are very poor and hard working; they earn a precarious livelihood. I

am told there are about 2,000. Very few of their children follow in their footsteps; most work in stores and some in factories. From the rag peddling business about 200 have become rag store-keepers. A large proportion of these own their own homes. The wealthiest is said to be worth about \$20,000. The rag store cannot well be established with a capital of less than about \$400.

Some 95 per cent. of the peddlers own their own horse and wagon; some of them, however, are so poor that they live partially on charity. The majority work in the city, but a portion ply their trade in the neighboring country towns.

Closely related to the above are the old iron dealers and peddlers. In fact, a rag dealer will often also deal in old iron, furniture, clothing, etc. But the old iron dealer is a sort of merchant, buying and selling iron and metal only. There are several hundred of these. Their earnings are higher than those of the rag peddlers. A number own their own homes and are quite prosperous. In their case the children are generally absorbed into other occupations.

The iron yard owners are a prosperous class. Some are reputed to be worth over \$200,000. They do an extensive business. They are generally former iron or junk dealers.

Dealers in old bottles buy their goods from the rag peddlers. Their business has been developed only in the past few years. There are but 15 or 20 in the city and they are doing well, several being worth as much at \$20,000, I am told.

Second-hand furniture store-keepers buy their goods, too, mostly at the rag peddlers. There are about 20 or 30 and they are making a fair living.

Of the fruit and market peddlers there are about 1,000. As they have not much to do in the winter, many go into the delivery business. In season they can earn from \$20 to \$35 per week. But as they are idle a great part of the year their average earnings are very low, and they are really poor people. Only a few are comparatively well-to-do, and own their homes. Some develop into grocery store keepers. Very few of the children of these peddlers follow the occupation of their fathers.

The dry goods peddlers seem to have lost ground during the last few years, but there are still several hundred. I

presume the department stores and mail order houses affect their business. Their business is done mostly among the foreign population of the city. Some, however, do peddling in the country, but keep their families in the city. With few exceptions, these are quite poor, barely making a living. Yet from this class are developed the dry goods merchants, wholesale and retail, who establish themselves in the city and through the country towns. Some of the wholesale merchants have grown to be wealthy. In a few instances they are worth several hundred thousand dollars. One house, I am informed, did a business of \$8,000,000 last year, employing over a thousand persons. Most of those who have established places in small towns are doing well, and some have broadened their business into department stores.

From a thousand to fifteen hundred families are supported from dry goods, notions, and gentlemen's furnishing goods stores. The children receive a good education, and often enter offices as clerks, book-keepers, and the like.

Only about 20 are in the furniture business. Some two or three have grown well-to-do, the wealthiest being worth about \$25,000.

Some of the clothing store-keepers in the First Ward in the centre of the business district are doing an extensive business. One is worth, perhaps, \$50,000. Not more than about 30 keep clothing stores proper, as distinct from second-hand stores or pawn shops, selling clothing.

There are some 20 or 30 shoe store-keepers. None are wealthy. A few are worth from \$2,000 to \$3,000 and the rest are doing fairly well.

There are a large number of store-keepers of various kinds throughout the city, selling crockery, ten cent goods, hats, etc.

About 100 Russian Jews are in the saloon business and are making a good living.

To me several points have established themselves quite clearly in this inquiry. In factories labor is divided so minutely that the work is very monotonous. As a consequence the Russian Jewish people, who as a rule are intelligent, will not continue to labor in factories and workshops, but will go into business, distributive occupations, or professions. If, therefore, a condition arose under which there would be no further immigration I believe that within the next twenty-five or thirty years but a small number of

the Russian Jewish people would be found as wage workers in factories. But since immigration every year brings a large number into this country, the very poor are by force of circumstances compelled to begin as wage workers. The transition from this position to that of the merchant and the professional man will, therefore, be continuous, at least for some time to come.

It should be added that at the present time Russian Jews are covering the country as small merchants and are developing into business men for the sale of clothing, dry goods, furniture, and the like.

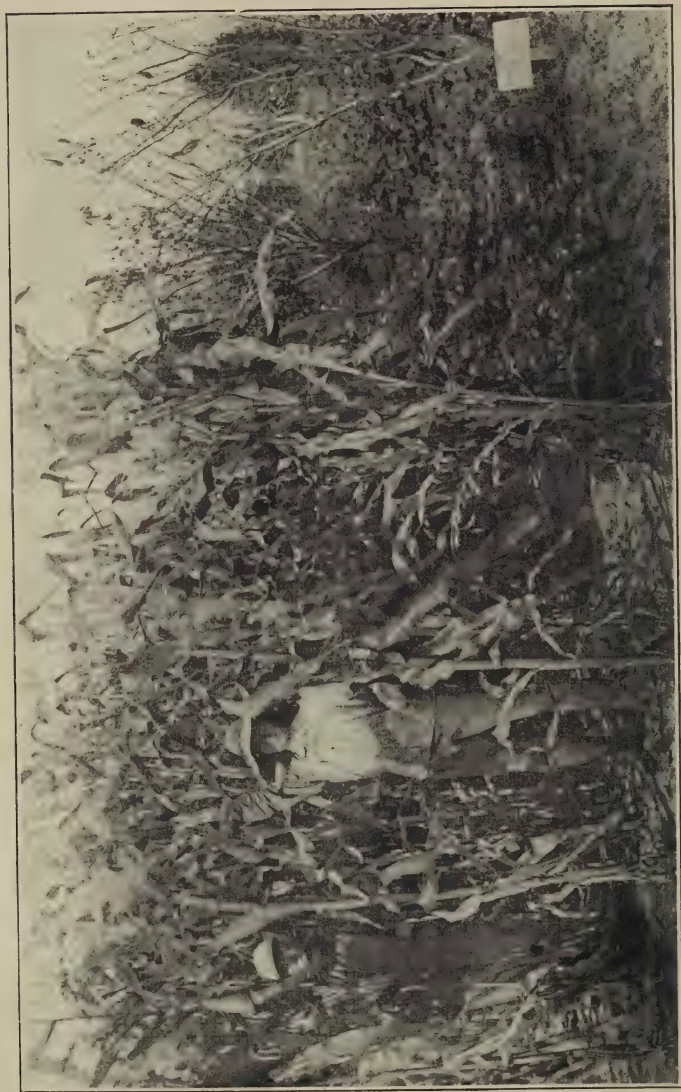
In my judgment, the establishment of industrial schools to which Jewish people could readily go would be very helpful in diversifying their occupations. With their wit and ability the Russian Jews ought to be able to develop in scientific and mechanical pursuits. In the process of civilization they would become much more important factors if they proceeded to qualify themselves along such lines. I find, however, that among graduates of our scientific and mechanical schools, through lack of the proper influence, it is often difficult to get a good footing, and this tends to abate the desire to prepare for such pursuits.





COUNTRY HOMES

*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, near Oakdale, Conn.*



CORN FIELD

*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, Woodbine, N. J.*

V

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY

## RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY

### (A) NEW YORK

The subject of this inquiry is rather difficult, owing to the complexity of its elements and the diversity of definitions given to religion.

There are two conceptions of religion involved in this subject, interwoven with the intensely interesting psychology of the Jew. They are found side by side in the same household and, consciously or unconsciously, are struggling for supremacy. The one has pressed itself into the very life of the older generation, and the other is as yet an inchoate view — which has had no vital and permanent influence on the lives of those who hold it.

That of the older generation amounts to this: Judaism is a religion with its centre in the synagogue and ramifications in every department of life — in business, in the home, in society. Affiliation with the synagogue is essential to a member of the Jewish religion. The Jew who attains the proper age at once enters upon the responsibilities of his Jewish citizenship, and *ipso facto* becomes a member of a religion which requires obedience to law. Traditions are not only a heritage — the subject of scholarly research — but an ever present and active influence on every day life. Religion is the greatest part of life and the synagogue the register in which every family enters its name.

Had only this conception of religion existed with us in New York, there would have been no difficulty in ascertaining the numerical strength of those affiliated with religion by means of a census of the Jewish community. But with the Jews, and especially with that Jewish community to which reference has been made, there never has been self-consciousness enough to produce a desire to make a numerical estimate of its strength, except when required by the law of the land.



Now, the East Side is the battle ground where this old representation of religion, accepted by the old generation, meets in conflict with a new conception, as yet unorganized, feeble and vague, which is held by the new generation.

Conflict is to be expected in every progressive community. The conflict in the Jewish community of the great metropolis is abnormally intensified by the various democratic influences which radiate from the community at large and which effectively bring about the assimilation of the more adaptable individuals.

What is the attitude of the old generation to the forces that are sweeping away their offspring from the ancient strongholds? Seldom is it on their part more than mere lamentation. They acquiesce in the inevitable and only berate the modern spirit which is radically undermining their influence.

The older generation of Russian Jews show a lack of organizing power and not even the new influences of a democratic city have resulted in giving them that power. With them, the new generation is incorrigible and they accept this fact with the fatalistic resignation of the oriental. They do not understand the new world.

The position of the newcomer to New York city is impossible of conception by the ordinary observer. The standard of monarchy must give way to that of democracy; authority is displaced by sectional anarchy. Communal pride of a petty sort impresses the foreign Jew with the necessity of joining a synagogue, but he finds very soon that the necessity is not so forceful as he had at first supposed.

The effect of this change in standards is to be seen in the medley of congregations which may be found in the city of New York, each with its limited territory and its ignorance of the others. Instead of one compact Jewish community with an organized centre we see group after group forming on the basis of democracy, with a steady defiance of all ecclesiastical authority beyond its own boundaries.

In the recent history of the Jewish community downtown this group-anarchy may be noted by a few illustrations. The Suwalker Chevra does not recognize the authority of the Rev. So-and-So. The Roumanians settled themselves in the upper part of down-town and are clearly

a distinct clan. The immigrants from Suwalk, Minsk, Odessa, etc., have their own congregations.

Formerly the rabbi of a congregation enjoyed his prerogatives with a feeling of power and a knowledge that obedience to law as interpreted by him was the one evidence of the true Jewish heart. In the loose community of New York the same rabbi found rival authorities, and — more important than all — a positive dislike of rabbinical authority not the free choice of the layman. America means to orthodoxy the breaking up of old communities, and the consequent attempt to establish a community with elements representing various local traditions and habits.

It will be of interest to note that practically all the congregations have adopted the ceremonies of the old synagogue, with very slight modifications — each with its own idiosyncracies. The ritual is practically the same, except in a sermon now and then, on a special occasion. The sermon, or *derasha*, is usually given before the afternoon services. The preachers, or *maggidim*, are seldom permanently connected with any one synagogue; they travel from one congregation to another and receive their compensation by collections from the faithful the day following the sermon. Few of these synagogues have religious schools connected with them, and even the *chedarim* (schools), which were often in the old country part of the synagogue, are here, with a few exceptions, usually entirely severed. The organization of modern children's schools is opposed by virtually all the modern orthodox synagogues. The opposition is based on the fear that is felt for all innovations.

The down-town synagogues are really institutional churches. An enumeration of the activities connected with the Forsyth Street synagogue will show this. It has a *chevra kadisha*, consisting of over twenty members, who perform all the rites connected with the burial of the members of the congregation: the *chevra* is social, for it gives banquets very often; on certain Sabbaths, its members are accorded privileges at the reading of the law. The same synagogue has organized a *chevra schas* or *mishnayoth*. This society has forty or fifty members, and there are no dues; the members study the Talmud every evening in the vestry rooms of the synagogue. The Ladies' Benevolent Society consists of over one hundred and fifty members; the dues are paid monthly, and are devoted to charity. The congregation is interested in distributing

matzoth during Passover. On specified Sabbaths promises of gifts are made for the Beth Israel Hospital, the Machsike Talmud Torah of the East Side, and other good works that may be brought to the attention of the congregation. The synagogue supports a rabbi, a cantor or chazan, and a choir, and its doors are open for worship morning and evening of every day. Its rabbi has no direct supervision over the slaughterers of meat; this matter is in the hands of other communal functionaries. The membership of the congregation is 150 and its annual income is seven thousand dollars.

Though the synagogue is not directly interested in the chedarim, the old generation shows its influence in the numerous chedarim with which the East Side is dotted — all conducted strictly on old country methods. Children of a very tender age are admitted to these schools and some ambitious parents send their offspring to a cheder even before it has attended a public school. The methods of instruction are as antiquated as one could imagine. The first years are devoted to teaching the art of reading, then translations and finally the study of the Talmud. The drill is continuous and wearing. Specimens of children who attend these chedarim are not at all creditable as models of physical development. The cheder-bred youth has his ear-marks, of which he is unable to rid himself even when fully grown. The schoolrooms are insanitary and often a menace to health, but from the opposition of the patrons of these schools, one would gather that just these features — the incessant drill, the long hours, the lack of ventilation, the crowdedness, are essential. It has been estimated that these schools on the East Side are equal to the number of congregations; but figures cannot tell us anything of value in this respect, because the number of retired rabbis, chazanim (cantors) and schochtim (official slaughterers), who earn a pittance by instructing children, cannot be counted; they are hidden away in the recesses of many a tenement.

The older generation shows its influence also in the Gemilath Chasodim Society, which is an altogether admirable society for the loaning of money to poor borrowers; but this society, it must be confessed, would have been of very little influence were it not for the substantial assistance it received and still receives from gentlemen connected with the up-town organizations.

What is the attitude of this older generation to reform?

It is clearly and unmistakably orthodox, and has not been as yet touched in the least by the reform wave which has swept over the German communities. If anything, the German reform movement appeals to very few—even of the more advanced class in the down-town population. The repulse of the Russian community by the German congregations, though not meant, has resulted in a feeling of distrust and dislike on the part of those who live down-town. As a result, anything that may be attributed to German reform is at once discountenanced by those who are in charge of down-town affairs, or who may contemplate certain innovations. The old cling tenaciously to all the customs possible of realization and form a compact and immovable opposition to progress.

Yet the orthodox elements represent all the organized forces of religion down-town, with the exception of one or two societies which we shall mention hereafter.

It would be a narrow mind, however, that would look only to the organized expression of religion for a complete inventory of the religious life of any community. Generally in every active community there is an undertow of radicalism which in its essence is religious and which because of the unpalatable form which religion takes with the orthodox, finds it impossible to affiliate.

The organized religious community is generally one-third dead. That proportion of its adherents are successfully ossified. Another third is composed of sluggish minds, or those whom habit conquers, who cannot conceive of anything new. The other one-third is composed of the hangers-on, who are neither here nor there—too weak to organize on their own platform and too timid to tear away entirely from the old.

A large majority of the younger people of the East Side are fully impregnated with genuine religious feeling. They are opposed to religion because they think that the religion they oppose stands for the essence of all religion. They are under the delusion at the present time that the form of the religion is its spirit.

It is no exaggeration to say that one-half of the maturing generation of the East Side is religious, and is gradually finding itself, and it is not too much to hope that it will soon give expression to its feelings on the subject



in some organized way. This does not mean, however, that the spirit is specifically Jewish.

Already there are two organizations on the East Side which represent the influence of the younger generation. One organization is known as the Jewish Endeavor Society, which is practically a self-supporting movement of young men and women, directed by theological students. The aim is a revival of interest in the orthodox Jewish religion. The society has established Saturday afternoon services and has placed on a respectable basis a number of classes for the study of Jewish religion, Jewish literature and Jewish ethical subjects. With one or two exceptions, all the classes meet down-town, and are led by theological students. Much has been expected of this society and interested persons are of the opinion that it would serve as an entering wedge for more religious organizations.

In the opinion of the writer, the Jewish Endeavor Society cannot be in any way effective as a focus for the latent religious feeling on the East Side; at the best, it can only hope to gather about it a very small portion of the young people of the district.

It is a great error to think that all the young people of the East Side have kept aloof of religion because the ceremonies have proved distasteful or discordant. Such a petty reason cannot be charged against them. Their opposition to the Jewish religion is not based on mere externals. There are many among them who have been affected by the progress of science and the spread of philosophical ideas and have given serious consideration to the fundamentals of religion. These enlightened minds, while not as yet fully confirmed in a theory of religion, are still so positive as to what they do not believe that they cannot be influenced by a revival of purified orthodox service.

Any form of religious service intended to be permanent, or as a focus for the younger people of the East Side, must combine not only a reverence for purified ancient ceremonies and religion, but a clear conception of the newer definition of religion which is taking hold of modern men and women.

Another organization which does not lend itself so well to the classification of a religious organization is the down-town Society for Ethical Culture; however, the seriousness of the movement permits of its classification under

this head. The latest utterances of Dr. Felix Adler on the subject of symbols, ceremonies, and religion, allow for the prophecy that this society will have much to do in a positive religious line of work in the near future.

The down-town section of the Ethical Culture Society is in the hands of the East Side young men and young women. It does its work in an educational way and has under its charge a number of classes in the kindergarten. Its weekly meetings have not been successful. The influence of this organization has been somewhat checked by the method of its formation. The purpose was to unite the young people of the district on a common ethical creed, but the fact that the society accepted a subsidy to do its work when it should have raised the required money from its own membership gives countenance to the prejudice that has arisen in some minds against the organization. The Ethical Society should not rest entirely on the saintliness of its leaders and should demand of those who affiliate with it a contribution to the cause equal to the benefit they receive.

It is unnecessary to mention the benevolent organizations and charitable societies organized outside of the synagogue, whose members are actuated by true religious feeling.

It seems that the Jewish religion has had its effects on the Jewish people in a way which gives one great hope for their future. Everywhere they have settled, whether affiliated with a synagogue or not, their efforts have been directed to good work in getting into right relations with one's neighbors, which is the essence of religion.

Ranging on the fringes of the community, and in some cases in the very heart of it, is that confused and defiant army of radicals, whose fulminations against religion by their very exaggeration lose their force. The student of the East Side must not neglect this army; it is both a menace and a benefit. It is a menace in its persistence and the passion and rancor which it displays against all forms of religion — all forms of enthusiasm, and every phase of idealism, which the community may express. It is a menace because the violent socialists and the enthusiastic anarchists seem to include in their condemnation of religion the ethical side of religion. But even this army has its good in its stinging of the self-complacent ortho-

dox to defend themselves.<sup>1</sup> These forces in their very natures are doomed to be ineffective, for they stand for disorganization and anarchy. They represent in the Jewish community what Robert Ingersoll represented in the Christian community: that is, opposition.

The radicals have of late come under the influence of the Jewish national idea, and as a result they are less bitter against the religious element than before. In their newspapers they have abandoned the advocacy of internationalism, and have declared themselves Jews, but in a national sense. No amount of rationalizing will check the growth of the feeling that their interests are closely allied to those of the Jewish people, and as a result we may see a more friendly spirit toward religion and a more liberal openness to essential religious influence than heretofore.

The elements I have described form a complete inventory of the religious activity of the East Side, in so far as such an inventory can be made.<sup>2</sup>

The problem before those who would influence the growth of religion on the East Side is not easy. The East Side looms up before the imagination of the American Jew as in a difficult situation because he has not been able to grapple with the situation. When he contemplates the East Side, he interprets its life to fit his own conceptions and views dissimilar conditions without discernment. If there is any improvement he believes it must follow the line of his own thinking and experience.

Now, obviously, the work on the East Side cannot be conducted without consideration of the elements which may be found there. There are orthodox Jews on the East Side, there are atheists, there are disciples of Emerson, there are followers of Kant and Comte, there are even theosophists and spiritualists in some number.

<sup>1</sup> The Christian missions for children have become very active. They, too, are arousing the orthodox Jews of the district to the need of providing some religious instruction, based on modern methods, for their children. But the absence of precedents, the lack of a common understanding, makes the success of any venture decidedly problematic. The so called "up-town" element is also interested and may initiate some institutions which will counteract the work of the missionaries, (whose work cannot be commended for its good influences). The Lucas classes may be mentioned. The Emanu El Brotherhood is also working on the same lines.

<sup>2</sup> I prefer not to give statistics on this subject. A thorough study of the figures is being made by Superintendent David Blaustein of the Educational Alliance, but there will, in my judgment, be little illumination in the figures, for in such a heterogeneous mass the mere statement of numbers has little significance.

The true educator is he who fits his methods to his pupils, and if the aim is the development of religious feeling he has no right to impose any phase of religious belief on those to be instructed.

It is not with the children that the religious problem concerns itself. The propagandists can effect very little in the community by imposing a form of religion. The Jewish religion can boast of being creedless. It demands simply a true heart, and to walk in the right path.

The only way that feeling can be instilled as a belief in life is by developing it according to the best methods with the material that is found among the people, with the germs of the religious feeling that are there.

If there are orthodox young men the philanthropist or educator should instill orthodoxy in them. If there are Emersonians among the young people (and no one will deny that the Emerson influence is religious), it is their duty to lead the Emersonian philosophy into an organized form. If there are believers in Kant, whose belief is so strong within them that they may be stimulated to organize for the propagation of their beliefs, the duty of the worker is to assist them and ask them no questions as to the orthodoxy or reform of their Judaism. If there are young people who believe that ethics only are essential, and religion secondary, and they are firm in their belief, the true worker will use this as a basis of organization among these young people — the point being always to utilize the germs of religious feeling in the formation of an organization — there to allow it to be developed.

Religion is a great indefinable influence, which no man can mark or limit, and it shows itself in innumerable aspects. In its essence it is neither Jewish nor Christian. It includes all of these, and he who would stimulate religion in a community which is so complex as the Jewish community of New York must make it his purpose not to further partisan views of religion but to be content if he further the growth of that greater religion which holds in its hands all minor revelations of itself.



## (B) PHILADELPHIA

That Judaism is more a religion of deed than of creed is best illustrated in the present time by the life of the Russian Jew. Religion with him is co-extensive with life, it regulates every detail of his daily existence and is so interwoven with every movement and action of his being that he never stops to question its authority. Even those who by contact with other civilizations and with other forces have changed their opinions about many of the sources and reasons of Jewish observances, are reluctant to abolish these observances from their daily life, so strong is communal opinion and so ingrained have these customs become in the very being of the Jew. The communities are organized in accordance with these customs, the whole social fabric in the Pale of Settlement is dependent upon these habits and ceremonies, the dignity and position of the members of the community are measured by their adherence to these laws and ordinances. So that, whereas we frequently meet with Jews in the smallest towns of the Pale who entertain the most unorthodox views, there are few, indeed, who would dare to indulge in unorthodox observances. The custom and habit of many centuries have not only surrounded all truly religious observances with halo of inviolable sanctity, but have also stamped many other actions — accretions from without — that have nothing to do with Judaism, with the religious sanction. For example, it took many years of heated discussion and disquiet before the Russian Jew became reconciled to the idea that the wearing of a short coat is not in conflict with Judaism, or that sitting bare-headed in one's house is not necessarily an indication of religious laxity. In fact, there are hundreds of Jewish communities even now in Russia, the members of which are horrified to see one of their brethren dressed in accordance with European fashion. It is the reverence for precedent and tradition which in the minds of the Russian Jew led to the inclusion of many such outward details that have apparently no bearing on religion.

What a tremendous shock all these views and opinions receive when the same Russian Jew enters this land of personal liberty and unrestrained individualism. A complete stranger to the public, the force of its opinion dwindles into insignificance so far as he is concerned. Coming in most cases with the intention of improving his economic condition, he is soon confronted with the awful problem of Sabbath observance. His veneration for the old observances having been shaken, his opinions about the sacredness of the institutions of society, as they exist in the old world having been changed when he first viewed the statue of liberty and received the explanation of its significance, and later when he listened to the first stump orator or read the first newspaper that came his way, it was easy to submit to the custom of the land, which to his mind, became identical with breaking away from all that was regarded as sacred and inviolable in his native province. The power of discrimination and acute analysis is not the common property of the multitude. The majority of men are unable to distinguish between the essential and the non-essential, and the average Russian Jew is no exception to this rule. With one sweep of the hand he changed his notions about religion and religious observance, together with his ideas about politics and government. Many a young man, who was firm in his religious convictions, while in his native village, who having heard of the religious laxity prevalent in America, had fully made up his mind not to be misled by the temptation and allurements of the free country, succumbed in his struggle and renounced his Judaism when first submitting his chin to the barber's razor,<sup>1</sup> at the entreaties and persuasions of his Americanized friends and relatives. Religion then appeared to him not only distinct from life but antagonistic to it, and since it was life, a free, full, undisturbed life that he sought in coming here, he felt compelled — and gradually habit and example made the compulsion agreeable — to divorce himself from all the religious ties that had hitherto encompassed him. Thus it is that the immigrant Jewish youth, not only those who had embraced other teachings and theories before their arrival in America, not only those who had cast their lot with the Russian martyrs for liberty in their native land, but even the simple, unsophisticated young men or women who had

<sup>1</sup> Shaving is prohibited according to ancient Jewish law. Leviticus, xix, 27; xxi, 5. Comp. *Talmud*, Makkoth, 20a *et seq.*

been faithful and loyal to the institutions of old and who desired to conduct their lives in accordance with the precepts of their religion, became estranged from Judaism and suffered themselves to be carried along by the tide, without offering any struggle for the maintenance of their cherished ideals. The old had become impracticable, had interfered with their pursuits and desires, and they were not strong enough, morally or intellectually, to select the good and the essential, and harmonize them with the new life into which they had been forced. Thus it is that the immigrant Jew in America has frequently become callous and indifferent, and sometimes cynical and antagonistic, to everything pertaining to Judaism.

Although the great bulk of early Jewish immigrants to America consisted of young people, it was not very long before their elders, their fathers and mothers, were invited to settle here. After one member of the family had accumulated some wealth, and established himself in business, he was anxious that the other members should be provided for, and when two or three brothers and sisters had settled here, it was natural that they should desire to have their parents with them. It is comparatively easy for a young man, especially one who is confronted with the disagreeable duty of serving for four years in the army without any prospect of advancement, to renounce all ties and leave the place of his birth, but it becomes an entirely different matter when older people, who have spent most of their lives in one place, are asked to sever all connections and begin life over again under new conditions. There are also the troubles of the journey, the passage of the boundary line, the great sea voyage, all of which appear insurmountable to the old, inexperienced villager of the Pale. Still, the love for their children, and the desire to be with them, in most cases enabled the parents to overcome all these difficulties and fears, and they safely arrived in the "free country," were lovingly received by their children and established in the new home provided for them. The old mother immediately assumes the duties of the household, and her husband, after a few days of sight-seeing, is either initiated into some easy labor, or is left alone to spend his time as he sees fit, his support being provided for by his children. Glad as they are of the fine appearance of their children, of their modern ways and their business successes, they cannot suppress a sigh at beholding their shaved chins,

or at seeing them eat their breakfast without having put on their phylacteries, prayed, washed their hands and pronounced the blessings before and after the meals — customs which they held sacred and inviolable. Their religious sentiments are constantly outraged by the actions of their children, and their cup of sadness and disappointment is filled to overflowing, when, on the first Sabbath they behold their children depart for their daily occupations. Who can measure the misery and wretchedness of the parents, strangers in a strange land, at seeing that which they regarded as dearer than life violated, voluntarily, by their own children? Many a father spent his first Sabbath in America in weeping and lamentation, many a mother turned hers into a day of mourning, a real Tisha B'ab (the ninth day of the month of Ab, the anniversary of the destruction of Jerusalem; the Jewish memorial day of mourning). They could not command as they would have done in their old home, for they are dependent upon their children. They cannot argue, for their arguments are met either with ridicule or with explanations of inexorable, unanswerable problems of economy which they do not understand. They can only silently weep at their misfortune and regret the day that they set foot in this "trefa medinah," this unclean land. In course of time, however, they become reconciled to conditions and though they themselves still adhere to the old customs and institutions of their religion, they regard as natural that the younger generation should disregard religious precepts and ceremonies. Some have engaged in business themselves and learned by experience the many temptations and allurements which constantly beset the way of the young and to which even some of the older people succumb. The old Jewess may still curse Columbus for his great transgression in discovering America, where her children have lost their religion, the old father may still relieve his burdened heart on the high holy days by reciting the confession of sins, but in the course of the year, they are either too much engrossed in other affairs or they become too much accustomed to religious violations to utter words of censure or regret. Thus the young go their way unmolested by the importunities of their parents. The old go theirs also. They organize synagogues and try to introduce here all the provincialisms and crudities to which they were accustomed in the small villages of Russia or Galicia whence they came. At home, some of the young men or women,



whose regard for their parents' sensibilities is greater than for their own convenience, perfunctorily observe the minutiae of religion, whilst others disregard them even when in the presence of their elders. Among the enthusiastic Russian Jewish youth there may also be found some, who, ensnared in the meshes of nihilism or socialism, as they understand the terms, consider it their duty to make converts to their new faith, and begin their missionary labors at home, thus embittering the lives of their parents by senseless and vexatious disputes. But these are in the minority; most of the young people are entirely indifferent and callous to their religion; they follow the smallest details of religious observance in the presence of their parents out of respect for them and disregard the most elemental institutions of Judaism when away from their homes. In neither case does there exist a genuine sympathy between the young and the old. The religious activities of the early Russian Jewish settlers were therefore entirely one-sided, made to harmonize with the needs and the habits of the older people. The generous, young, Americanized Jews permitted their parents to introduce the old ways into the new land. Even when they contributed toward the support of the synagogue, they did so not out of the sense of supporting an institution that was needed, but to indulge the old people in their whims and follies. They did not attempt to gain control of these institutions, for they did not want them. The institutions have therefore become counterparts of similar ones in the small villages of Russia, wanting, however, the features which make the latter influences for good in the community. The congregations are sometimes characterized by a spirit of commercialism, not at all in harmony with the cause they represent and lacking the essential characteristics of a congregation by failing to unite the various elements into one body or to inspire them with broad religious feeling.

When Russian Jews first came in large numbers to Philadelphia most of the Jewish congregations in the city had already introduced reforms in their services. Religious scruples, social differences, and a spirit of clannishness that is natural to foreigners caused the Russian Jews to form synagogues of their own. The only orthodox synagogue where the services were conducted in strict accordance with tradition was the Portuguese Synagogue Mickvé Israel, but there the social distinction was still greater and the differ-

ence in the pronunciation of the Hebrew and in the ritual made the service almost unintelligible to the Russian Jewish immigrant. The German Jewish population had at that time moved to the upper sections of the city, whereas the Russian immigrants settled mainly in the district south of Spruce Street, so that distance combined with other causes to force the newly arrived immigrants to organize congregations of their own in the districts where they lived. Already before the general exodus from Russia in the early eighties there was a small Jewish community in Port Richmond, in the northeastern section of the city, which maintained its own synagogue. But, as it appears, the later arrivals preferred to remain in the southern section, and in the course of but a few years a flourishing Jewish community with synagogues and other religious institutions was established in the district bounded by Spruce Street on the north, Washington Avenue on the south, Broad Street on the west, and the Delaware River on the east. The two largest synagogues belonging to the congregations B'nai Abraham Anshe Russia (organized in 1882) and Keshet Israel (formerly B'nai Jacob, organized in 1883), are situated on Lombard Street, the first on the north side above Fifth, the second on the south side above Fourth Street. These, however, were not the first congregations organized by the Russian Jewish immigrants, nor were they the only ones. In many cases the founding of a congregation proceeded along the following lines: A few individuals, usually such as came from the same town or district, feeling the necessity of some concerted action, banded themselves together to form a beneficial society ordinarily bearing the name of the town or district whence most of the members came. The aim of such societies, in the first instance, was to assist financially any of the members who might be sick, to provide burial for the dead, and a death benefit for the widow or orphan of a deceased member. After the society became strengthened in numbers, a hall was hired for meeting purposes and was converted into a praying room. With the approach of the high holy days, a season when every Jew feels the need of a synagogue, a reader was engaged and seats sold to members or non-members. This brought a considerable revenue to the society and after a few years, in many cases, the organizations saved enough money to begin negotiations for a synagogue building. Jews evinced no scruples in regard to turning a church into a Jewish

synagogue, and since the neighborhood was becoming more and more Jewish, the Christians gradually moving to other parts of the city, a church building was easily obtainable. In fact, most of the Jewish synagogues in Philadelphia were formerly Christian churches. The building was bought and altered for purposes of Jewish worship and the society imperceptibly turned into a congregation, retaining, however, for a long period, its beneficial elements. In this manner most of the Russian Jewish synagogues were formed. The distinction between a chevra and a congregation consists in the fact that the former has no special building for religious worship, whereas the latter has. We frequently meet with two or more chevras worshiping in the same building on various floors, either because they are unwilling to unite and buy a building of their own or because, as is often the case, even when united they are unable to procure sufficient funds for a building. As might be expected, these chevras conduct their services in many cases in an undignified manner, the officers being interested in the money they expect to realize from the service rather than in the religious and moral improvement of the worshippers.

The position of the rabbi in the Russian Jewish community is peculiar. In Russia the rabbi is, as a rule, not connected with any particular congregation but is regarded as the ecclesiastical head of all the Jews. In larger communities he is given one or more assistants (*dayyanim*—judges) who help him in the administration of justice, which is still one of the functions of the Russian rabbi, or in the decision of ritual cases. Some congregations may select for themselves preachers (*maggidim*) who interpret legal or homiletic works to large gatherings, every day at dusk, between the afternoon and evening services, and deliver religious discourses on Saturday afternoons. The rabbi, however, is looked upon as the chief of the community. He rarely preaches, he sometimes visits the constituent synagogues, and on the Sabbath preceding Passover and on the penitential Sabbath (between New Year and the Day of Atonement) delivers learned discourses at the largest synagogue in town, to which all are invited. The majority of the people rarely come in contact with the rabbi; his greatness is measured not by his work among them, but by his knowledge of Jewish lore and by his assiduity in study; his position is of the highest dignity and honor.



It is entirely different with the rabbi in this country. On account of the diverse elements of nationality and religious proclivities, no one rabbi is satisfactory to all the members of the community. Where the institution of chief rabbi was tried it invariably failed for this reason. The individual congregations were either unable or unwilling to engage the services of a rabbi and many of them even dispensed with a hired reader, since almost every Jew is able and anxious to read the services. The lay officers conduct all the affairs of the congregation, the spiritual needs of the older people are attended to by themselves or by one of their number more learned than the rest, reading and interpreting portions of the rabbinic literature in the room adjoining the synagogue. The children are taught Hebrew and religion at their homes or at the established religious schools. The young people of older growth do not visit the synagogue and do not care for religious instruction, so that the services of a rabbi are regarded by them as superfluous. Still, with the increase of the population and the more perfect organization of the community, the need of a communal leader became obvious and some congregations have elected a rabbi. To import a rabbi from Russia and assure him a respectable livelihood was beyond the ability of any single body, and the union of a few congregations in the election of a rabbi, although attempted in a few instances, could not succeed because of the divers elements and different tendencies of each congregation. So that those congregations which desired a rabbi had to satisfy themselves with the material at hand and select from their midst a learned man, authorized to decide religious questions, and to undertake the control of their spiritual affairs. The salary offered is usually very small, but many perquisites fall to the share of the rabbi. These consist of wedding fees, fees for the supervision of the ritual slaughter of animals, fees for the supervision of the ritual preparation of various articles of food for the Passover, and of occasional presents by wealthy members. In return the rabbi is expected to preach occasionally in the synagogue and to answer questions of law and of ritual. It will be noticed from his various duties and privileges here enumerated that the relation between rabbi and congregation is not close, not one of thorough sympathy and mutual understanding. The rabbi is still the rabbi of the community, not of an organized community, but one of individuals. Congregations



frequently permit their rabbi to be elected by other congregations also, without there being any union of interests, and, on the other hand, many so-called rabbis arise who are not connected with any congregation, but, being supported by a few individuals, exercise the functions in a certain district. There are always, however, two or three, who by virtue of their activity and tact, succeed in making themselves nominally at least the heads of the community, and in causing the people to respect their opinions on communal questions. In Philadelphia, Rev. B. L. Levinthal, the rabbi of the B'nai Abraham Congregation since 1891, and subsequently elected by a few other congregations, is recognized as the chief of the Russian rabbinate, while Rev. A. H. Ershler, of the Ahavas Achim Anshe Shavil Congregation, and Rev. Nathan Brenner, of the B'nai Israel Congregation of Port Richmond, are also recognized authorities in Jewish law and identified with a number of communal movements. Besides these, there are a number of other rabbis, some connected with congregations, others deriving a livelihood from occasional fees — frequently given in an unbecoming manner. The evil of this system, however, is being recognized by the Russian Jews as well as by their rabbis, and the Union of Orthodox Rabbis, a national organization established a few years ago, has made many attempts to regulate the rabbinate, but so far with very little success.

There are three classes of educational institutions in a Jewish community of Russia, the cheder, the Talmud Torah, and the yeshibah. The first is usually a private venture conducted by an individual who receives a stipulated sum per semester for every child he instructs. The instruction continues for the whole day and the subjects included in the curriculum extend over the entire range of elementary Jewish education, from the Hebrew alphabet to the study of the Talmud and its commentaries. Religion *per se*, or Jewish history is rarely taught in the cheder, the pupil being expected to derive his knowledge of these subjects from his study of the Bible and the Talmud. The Talmud Torah is a public institution maintained by the community for giving instruction free of charge to the children of the poor. It is like the cheder except that it is less modern in its methods. The yeshibah is a higher institution of learning where the Talmud and subsequent rabbinic literature only are studied, under the guidance of a rosh yeshibah (chief of the academy). This is usually a public

institution and is maintained by contributions from various communities and in a few instances from the whole Jewish body, and even Jews outside of Russia. In the yeshibah the instruction imparted by the teacher is of very little importance. The greatest stress is laid on individual study and research. The Russian government, true to its policy of preventing assemblies of young people, no matter what the object, looks with suspicion upon these academies, and in 1892 closed the doors of the oldest and most famous, the Yeshibah of Volosin, the pride of the Russian Jews. Still many of greater or lesser reputation, depending entirely on the erudition of their chiefs, still exist in Russia, where the growing youth devote their years to the mastery of the intricate literature of the rabbis. There is one characteristic feature in all Jewish educational institutions in Russia,—they are consciously or unconsciously kept distinct from the synagogues.

The American public school system, under which every child is expected to spend the greater part of the day in secular studies, prevented the earlier settlers from introducing the educational methods to which they were accustomed. The problem was partly solved for them by the Hebrew Sunday schools which had been in existence in Philadelphia many years before the Russian Jewish exodus. The Hebrew Sunday School Society and the Hebrew Education Society immediately took steps toward meeting the increasing demands of the growing community and established schools in the sections where the settlement was most dense. But these schools, though largely patronized by children of Russian Jews, were not considered sufficient by their parents, either because Hebrew was not regarded as of prime importance in the curriculum, or because the modern methods employed in these schools were looked upon by them with suspicion. Hence the cheder was introduced here, of course in a greatly modified form. The most common custom is to have the teacher come to the pupil's house after school hours every day and instruct him in the rudiments of Hebrew, especially that which is used in public worship. These teachers receive a very moderate compensation. They are frequently altogether unacquainted with pedagogic principles. The more advanced teachers, after some struggle and privation, succeeded in obtaining a patronage large enough to warrant their opening a school for the afternoon hours, where Hebrew is the chief and

frequently the only subject of instruction. That these private religious schools are productive of so little good is due to various causes of which but a few will be mentioned here. The teacher or rabbi, if he is experienced in teaching, which is not always the case, is usually of foreign birth and training and has very little sympathy with the wants and desires of the American child and no understanding of his tricks and subtleties. The language used in instruction is in most cases Yiddish, a language that is foreign to the pupil even though he use it in conversation at home. The rewards and punishments in use in these schools are obnoxious to a child acquainted with the more refined methods of the public schools. The system with which these teachers are acquainted is the old system of the cheder under which the child was expected to devote the whole day to Jewish subjects, and it is very difficult for them to adapt themselves to new conditions. If there is lack of sympathy and understanding between the immigrant father and the American trained child, there is open hostility between the rabbi of the cheder and his pupils. These and other causes militate against the cheder.

The need of providing instruction for the children of the poor was made obvious to the leaders among the Russian Jews, and a free school (Talmud Torah) was established in 1890, where religious instruction is given free of charge or for a small fee, to the children of the poor. In course of time, when the Jews began to move up-town, another school was established there, and recently a third has been organized in the far southern section. These schools are attended altogether by about 1,000 children and are supported by a regular membership and by voluntary contributions. Sessions are held every day of the week, including Saturdays and Sundays, and the method of instruction differs very little from that pursued in the cheder. During the past year, in accordance with a resolution passed by the Union of Orthodox Rabbis, a Hebrew high school (later, Yeshibah Mishkan Israel) was organized by Rabbi Levinthal, where instruction in Talmud and in the higher branches of Jewish lore are imparted to boys of advanced age, with the view to preparing them for the rabbinate. Judgment must be reserved on this new venture until a later time. Some congregations have attempted to organize schools in connection with their synagogues, and in a few instances this has proved highly successful. It should be added that in al-



most all these institutions only boys are admitted, the girls being left entirely without any religious instruction or receiving it at home or in the Hebrew Sunday School Society's classes.

A few attempts have been made to organize the young people for religious purposes, but these have invariably failed. The numerous societies of young people in the southern section of the city make little or no provision for religious education, their endeavors being mainly along social and literary lines. The Hebrew Literature Society is the oldest and strongest of the kind down-town. Its former radical tendency is gradually disappearing and lectures on strictly Jewish subjects are listened to with attention in its halls; but it has not yet taken a positive stand in religious matters. The Young Men's Hebrew Union's activities are social and broadly educational. There are other societies composed of young people which make no pretence, even in name, to any religious activity. The Zionist societies, however, though not aiming directly at religious improvement, exert a decidedly good influence on their constituencies. Lectures on Jewish subjects are the rule in these organizations and classes for instruction in Jewish history and Hebrew meet with some success among them. Since the establishment of the Zion Institute in 1902, a building especially devoted to Zionist purposes, the activity in these lines has increased. There is a library and reading room, where a majority of the books and periodicals are in Hebrew. Recently a decorous service for the high holy days was instituted. The Zionist ideal, which presupposes a strong national Jewish consciousness among its devotees, cannot but be productive of stronger religious sentiments, of a more virile interest in Israel's past.

An attempt was made a few years ago to organize a reform synagogue down-town for those to whom the service in the existing synagogues had become distasteful. Friday evening services were held in a hall, in accordance with the reform mode of worship and an English sermon was delivered by one of the up-town reform rabbis. But the attempt failed for many reasons, the most prominent being the lack of interest on the part of the down-town Jews. After a short existence, the congregation was dissolved. Another attempt to organize the young people in a religious body was made under the name of the Jewish Endeavor Society,



modeled after the New York society of the same name. With the financial aid of the Council of Jewish Women, this society arranged for Saturday afternoon services at one of the largest synagogues down-town, with attractive singing and an English sermon. The services were conducted in strictly orthodox style but were made decorous and attractive. This also failed and its failure may be ascribed to lack of interest in religious matters on the part of the young people. As the result of a suggestion made by Rev. Dr. Joseph Krauskopf, president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, at its convention in St. Louis during the summer of 1904, more active propaganda were made in the lower section of the city for the establishment of a reform congregation. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations sent its representative, Rabbi George Zepin, to organize the movement. He succeeded in interesting some down-town Jews in the movement and an organization was effected under the name of Congregation Israel. Down-town orthodox rabbis and laymen viewed the movement with alarm, and a circular advising parents not to permit their children to attend the services was distributed broadcast in the down-town districts. During the high holy days the attendance was quite large. It remains, however, to be seen whether this movement will meet with greater success than those that preceded it.

To obtain a glimpse of the future religious status of the Russian Jews now living in Philadelphia, it is necessary to consider the elements making up that body. It is quite evident that from the older immigrants who arrived in this country with settled habits and ideas very little can be expected. They will continue to live in the same manner as they were accustomed to and observe the ceremonies that have become part of their lives. Such as have become estranged from religion are too few and their influence too insignificant to demand particular attention. The hope of Judaism in America rests with the young people and especially with those of the Russian immigrant class, both because of their numbers and increasing influence and of their superior intellectual attainments. It is these young people that demand our especial consideration if we venture a forecast of the future of Judaism in this or any other part of the land.

Broadly speaking, we may divide the young people of down-town Jewry into three classes. Such a division is not

comprehensive, but it will be sufficient to give an insight into present conditions and will permit of conjecture as to the future.

First. The young people that hail from the lower classes of Russian Jewish society who have never had the advantages of culture or education of any kind. These, on arriving, constitute in America the great army of sweatshop workers and soon become the playthings of every unscrupulous demagogue. Oppressed by their employers, who, in most cases, belong to the same social class, they rebel, and in their ignorance confuse economic and religious problems and misinterpret the new theories of social economy presented to them by the labor leaders. They become not only indifferent to religion but also actuated by a hatred toward everything that has a religious flavor. Their leaders are mostly disappointed Russian students, banished political offenders, or such other persons as have become embittered by the state of affairs in Russia and who carry their dissatisfaction with the political status in that land into the realms of economy and religion. They find ready listeners in the group of wretched, overworked, and underfed laborers, who are glad to find sympathy among the learned and who become willing disciples of all their theories.

Second. The young people who come from the middle classes of Russian Jewish society, who have had opportunities for some refinement at home and some education at the cheder and other institutions of Jewish learning and have acquired some modern education through private instruction. These, on coming to America, either become petty tradesmen, store-keepers, or, if they are successful in obtaining some support at the beginning, enter a professional school and are graduated as lawyers or physicians, the two favorite professions among Russian Jews in America. The peddlers who sell on the installment plan, or the shopkeepers, though many of them possess a good knowledge of Judaism and of Jewish history, and are especially attracted by the Zionist movement, having been compelled at first to abandon many religious customs and institutions, become careless about religion and indifferent to its behests. The professional men also forsake religious practices either because they have become convinced atheists or agnostics or because it pays them better to stand aloof from the synagogue. It is an old paradox that Jews have greater respect

for him who stands at a distance from them in religious matters than for one who takes a most active part in the synagogue.

Third. The young people who were born in this country or were brought here in childhood and have had the advantages of a public school training. These should be the chief concern of the communal worker, for on them the future of Judaism mainly depends. Their religious education is defective and their religious observances, if they do observe anything in deference to their parents, lacks spirit and interest. Most of them are not antagonistic to religion, but are indifferent to it, and wholesome influences may have a salutary effect upon their religious attitude. They are unsympathetic with the existing synagogues because the synagogue offers them very little, it being entirely managed and directed by the older people, who do not and cannot understand them. They are indifferent to Jewish practice because it has never been presented to them in a light that would appeal to their more modern and more cultured tastes. If synagogues were established exclusively for these young people and their management directed toward the needs of this rising generation, they could yet be won over to a staunch Judaism. The time is probably as yet unripe for such work, but it is not very far distant. Modern synagogues, presided over by trained American rabbis, will eventually be introduced in the Russian Jewish sections of our large cities, and a more perfect and homogeneous religious body will be formed in American Israel.

## (C) CHICAGO

We find upon investigation that the Russian Jewish people have accomplished more than they are generally credited with, and that as soon as opportunity is open to them they make good use of it and stand at least on a par with their brethren of other nationalities.

They do not wish to be patronized, they desire to be understood, and not being understood by their German Jewish brethren, who often look down upon them, they choose to dwell among their own kind and to live according to their traditional customs. They are generally industrious and thrifty, and their first interest, after providing for their families, is in the synagogue and the religious school.

They are often charged with being dirty, sometimes filthy; but if we reflect that after arriving on these shores their first residence is generally in a neglected section of the city, and the first object lessons they receive consist of dirty streets and alleys and broken down tenements without sanitary accommodations, we shall be less ready to find fault. Put these immigrants into model houses where bath rooms, pure air, and sunshine are not unknown, where the members of the family can have sleeping rooms apart from the common living rooms, so that privacy is not infringed upon, and then if they do not come up to your expectations, blame them if you will; but not while they are in such dirty, restricted and ill-kept quarters. Blame, first, the city administration that allows such disgraceful conditions to exist; second, the niggardly householder who will not keep his premises in decent condition, but extorts from the poor exorbitant rental; and last, the weary mother of numerous children, whose two hands must keep house and children clean and perform the many duties that devolve upon her. Surely, the maxim of one of our sages, "Judge not thy fellow man until thou hast been put in his place," should be borne in mind when such charges are made.

Surrounded by so many unfavorable conditions, many Russian Jews notwithstanding consider it imperative to be-



long to a congregation and to provide religious instruction for their children. They know that the public school will attend to their secular education, so out of their scant earnings they pay synagogue and Talmud Torah (religious school) dues. The synagogue plays a very important part in the daily life of the orthodox Russian Jew, for his life and religion are so closely interwoven that public divine worship is to him a duty and a pleasure. The synagogue is the religious and social centre around which the activity of the community revolves and has now become, since the formation of auxiliary loan societies, a distributing agency for its various philanthropies, where "personal service" is not a fad, but has always been recognized in dealing with the unfortunate. Small wonder is it that the orthodox Russian Jew clings to his synagogue. It is open not only "from early morn till dewy eve," but far into the night, and in some cases the doors are never closed. Daily worship begins early, so that the laboring man can attend service and yet be in time for his work. There are morning, afternoon, and evening services — seldom attended by women. Often the peddler's cart can be seen standing near the entrance while the owner is at prayer within. On Sabbaths and holy days services are always well attended by men and women, the latter occupying a gallery set apart for their use.

Expense is not spared in making the exercises interesting to the older people, but little is done to attract the younger generation. The beautiful Hebrew language, which they do not understand, is used exclusively in the service. And when there is a sermon it is in Yiddish, and rather tedious and uninteresting for the young people, who are almost starving for that religious food which would satisfy the heart and mind.

Connected with the synagogue is the *beth hamedrash*, or house of learning, where students of religious literature are always welcome, and Bible and Talmud are studied and discussed. Many take advantage of the opportunity thus afforded, and form study circles or meet for devotional reading. There is much to attract and hold the older generation, who are continually receiving accessions from abroad and in their lives the synagogue means much, if not all worth striving for.

The beginning of a congregation is generally a *minyan* or gathering of at least ten men for divine worship. This

is held in rented quarters. As soon as a sufficient number of members are gained they resolve to form an organization, and when funds are forthcoming a house of worship is bought or built.

The Ohave Sholom Mariampol, the oldest congregation, began in this way in 1872. Its property was destroyed by fire in 1874, after which a hall was again rented. Its membership increased rapidly, smaller congregations joined it, and its present structure was erected in 1888 at a cost of \$6,250. Nearly all the charitable organizations of the West Side can trace their origin to this congregation, whose membership is now one hundred and fifty. In 1890 certain members became displeased and seceded, forming the Mishne U'gemoro Congregation, excluding from membership all who were not strict adherents of traditional law. They now have 55 members and own their building.

The largest congregation is the Anshe Keneseth Israel, which was organized originally as Anshe Russia in 1875. In 1887 it united with Keneseth Israel and later Anshe Suwalk joined. It now numbers 200 members, possesses a building valued at \$35,000, twenty Sepher Torahs (Scrolls of the Law), and a large library for religious study circles.

The synagogues not only serve religious needs but do a large amount of philanthropic work. There are about twenty-five on the West Side, representing an investment of approximately \$90,000, and a membership of more than 2,000. These congregations are self-supporting, members contributing annual dues, ranging from \$6 to \$12. Permanent or life seats are from \$100 to \$150 each. Yearly rentals are from 50 cents to \$5, entitling the holder to a seat for himself and one in the gallery for his wife or other female relative. In addition to synagogue dues there are dues for the Talmud Torah (Hebrew Free School); the Hachnosis Orchim (Shelter for Strangers); the Beth Moshav Zkeinim (Home for the Aged); the Lechem L'rovim (Bread for the Hungry); the Gomley Chesed Shel Emeth (Association for the Free Burial of the Poor); the free loan associations which loan money to those in need and charge no interest; the yeshibahs or strictly orthodox advanced schools of Jewish learning in this city and in Russia; the Palestine chaluka or charity for indigent Jews of the Holy Land. Before Pesach, or Passover, a fund is raised to supply the poor with matzoth

(Passover cakes) and other necessities, and when winter sets in coal is given to poor families. The Mariampol Congregation now gives sick benefits and endowments to members, but how this plan will work as time goes on remains to be seen.

The few well-to-do men of a congregation often distribute many tons of coal among the struggling poor, and with the gift is generally given the friendship of the giver. The poor man is not regarded as a beggar; he is encouraged to tell his troubles and difficulties and receives in return friendly advice and assistance. The free loan associations have proven a great success and deserve special mention because the recipients of aid show a desire not to accept charity except when dire necessity compels.

The dues for all the auxiliary societies are collected by paid agents who receive about six or seven dollars per week. They are furnished with perforated stamp books, in which each stamp is a receipt for five or ten cents. They give these when they make the weekly collections. This way of paying dues is found the most convenient for the people of small income.

We should not be surprised that the Russian Jews have not established large institutions with their own means, as the capital to be drawn upon is limited. It is estimated that out of an income of seven or eight dollars per week an average man gives twelve dollars per year for religious or charitable purposes, that is, three per cent. of his gross income.

The use of the synagogues is given freely for meetings, religious, charitable, or educational. It shows a broad sentiment, when, as was the case one winter, women were allowed to speak from the pulpits of orthodox synagogues and make appeals for the Beth Moshab Zkeinim Bazaar, which was given for the purpose of erecting a home for aged Jews, to be conducted according to orthodox custom. The religious sentiment underlying this movement was strong; it served to enlist orthodox Jews all over the city, with the result that in less than a year's time the B. M. Z. Association had bought a lot of ground in a good location. The bazaar was then undertaken by a band of noble men and women and the gross receipts amounted to over \$13,000, the expenditures about \$2,000. This large amount came chiefly from the pockets of the middle class



and the poor, for the wealthy German co-religionists, with a few noteworthy exceptions, held aloof. A Jewish philanthropist encouraged the movement by a donation of \$20,000, on condition that a building valued at \$40,000 be erected. On May 3, 1903, the Home, costing in all about \$85,000, received its first inmates and it has been successful in upholding religious regulations. A second bazaar for the purpose of paying off a mortgage of \$20,000 was recently given and the amount realized was sufficient, leaving the building free of debt.

One excellent result of this movement was the bringing out of the younger people interested in orthodox Judaism and the evidence it gave them of the effective power of organization. Would that these young men and women, reared in this blessed land of liberty, with enthusiasm unbounded, with spiritual yearnings unsatisfied, could find adequate provision made for them in the synagogue. But there is none and they remain away. The only opportunity they have of hearing an English sermon or prayer is in the reform or conservative temples, where changes in the service have been made, of which they cannot approve, but which they are gradually led to condone. The strong attachment they feel for the traditions of their fathers could yet be maintained and developed and directed into desirable channels if the eyes of their elders could be opened and they would insist on having a modern orthodox English preacher in the synagogue and some portion of the service in English.

The young people are gradually drifting away from religious influences. They cannot and will not adapt themselves to the old methods that do not appeal to their spiritual instincts, and their elders cannot be made to realize the necessity of the compromise, but go blindly their own way. The result is that their sons and daughters are becoming ethical culturists, free thinkers, agnostics and atheists. From a strict and to them unintelligent orthodoxy these have gone to the other extreme, because they were not properly instructed in the principles of their religion, which are exemplified by its ceremonies. The Sabbath is desecrated, and indifference in religious matters reigns. A modern orthodox English preacher imbued with the old Jewish spirit could influence the younger generation. A young people's synagogue should be established on the West Side with attractive services and a



sermon on Sabbath afternoons and at any other time that might be deemed advisable. The older people do not willingly break their Sabbaths and would be only too glad to see that their children did not, but it seems they cannot take the initiative in providing a religious stimulus for the young people in accordance with modern methods. That must come from those who understand the necessity for immediate action. There are some who realize this necessity but the opposition to any innovation is still great and we can but hope that time and intelligence will solve the serious problem. In the meantime, the young people find satisfaction in forming Zionist societies and literary, social and educational organizations, which furnish them an outlet for their surplus energies. Foremost among these are the Hebrew Literary Association (organized in 1885), the Self Educational Club (organized in 1894), and the Gates of the Order Knights of Zion.

What is being done for the religious needs of the children of the district? For the boys much, for the girls comparatively little. The Moses Montefiore Hebrew Free School, which is the principal religious school on the West Side, has an attendance of 800 boys, ranging from four to thirteen years of age. This is inadequate for the population and the management has built a branch school which accommodates about 600 boys. Chedarim or private classes, are to be found in many blocks of the crowded district. The hours and subjects taught are the same as at the Talmud Torah, but in some instances more modern methods are employed. Many of the classes are held amid unhealthy surroundings in basements and living rooms. They usually number from twenty to forty pupils. About 1,200 boys receive instruction in these classes. The children attend until they become bar mitzvah (formally admitted to the faith at the age of thirteen) or go to high school, when, if the parents can afford, private teachers are employed. Probably 600 children take private lessons, paying from \$2 to \$5 per month. The hours for those who attend the Talmud Torah are from 9 A. M. to 3:30 P. M. for children not attending public school, and for older children from 4 P. M. to 7:30 P. M. The subjects taught are the Hebrew alphabet, reading, grammar, translation of the Pentateuch, Prophets, Hagiographa, into Yiddish, and portions of the Mishna and Gemara. Sixteen teachers and two

janitors are employed. Books are furnished to pupils gratis when they are unable to pay for them.

During a visit to the Hebrew Free School, I found it a rare treat to hear boys of six years of age and upwards translate into Yiddish the Hebrew of the Pentateuch and the Prophets and then repeat in English the substance of what they had been learning. I was surprised to note that many ethical lessons had been imparted by the teacher during the course of his instruction. We are apt to condemn the methods of these teachers because they are not up-to-date. I doubt, however, if all our boasted progress in educational work can produce as successful results. Little boys translating and explaining from the original the stories of Noah, of Joseph, of the Tribe of Benjamin, or a chapter from Isaiah, with the ethical lessons to be derived therefrom, and receiving from the teacher such commentary as no English translation contains. And no breath of higher criticism, so-called, interferes with the implicit belief in the occurrence of the events described, but a deep sense of the omnipotence and mercy of God and an unquestioning faith in divine providence are inculcated.

I almost forgave the uncleanly condition of the building, the lack of ventilation of the rooms, although there were many windows through which fresh air could have entered; the loud tone of the recitations; the pounding on the desk for order, and the untidy appearance of some of the boys,—when I saw before me so many bright faces full of energy and intelligence, and above all, faith. Why need we feel discouraged as to the future of Judaism in this country when we see a rising generation trained in Jewish lore, and in the secular knowledge which the public school offers, that will mold its destinies? For these children of Russian and Polish Jewish parentage have within them all the elements that will give them power when they grow to manhood. The ambition, perseverance and scholarship which is their inheritance and which will find an outlet under the free institutions of this great country, if properly directed by men and women of culture and piety, will serve to hasten the end of what Zangwill terms a “transitional” period in Judaism.

But to direct them aright? Have they the men and the women to do it? Some who could be leaders have deserted their people, have moved to fashionable quarters,

and to their shame, be it said, pay no heed to the needs of the district from which they hailed, and rather wish to sever their connection with those they left behind. Others have the ability and the will, but cannot spare the time. Let us hope that the period is not far distant when from their own ranks will arise teachers and leaders, imbued with the modern spirit and the old scholarship and reverence for the law and its traditions, who will instill into the minds of the children such respect for the historical ceremonies of Judaism, by dwelling upon the great ethical principles that underlie them, that they will not fail to observe them, for only by the intelligent practice of these ceremonies can Judaism be preserved and fulfil its mission.

The ethical value of religious observance is great, though not so generally recognized because the mechanical performance of a precept — although it in itself carries an ethical lesson with it — has been impressed upon the child's mind to the exclusion of its spiritual meaning. However it may be in Europe, in this country a boy or girl instinctively seeks a reason for everything. When he is not taught the reason for religious observances, they lose their value in his eyes, and he often disregards them as unworthy of the enlightenment of the present day. Where, as is so often the case, home training is insufficient, the religious school should step in and supply the deficiencies. Not only should the meaning of the laws and ceremonies be taught to young and old, but also the difference between an obligatory and an optional precept (*din* and *minhag*). The neglect of this branch of instruction brings about serious dangers. The local rabbis in their Yiddish *derashas* (sermons) are content to expound this or that passage of Holy Writ, ignoring entirely present conditions and dangers; an English speaking rabbi who could influence the young is unknown in the district. Even the sanctity of the Sabbath is being violated to a much greater extent than would be the case were some powerful voice raised against it. While the majority of the older people are strict in their observance of it, especially in the home, where it is greeted by even the poorest with a little special preparation, many of the young men and women are compelled by economic conditions to work on the Sabbath. Are these to be censured as much as the Russian Jews who own large mercantile



establishments in the heart of the Jewish district, who are far beyond want, whose employees are Jewish, whose customers are Jewish, and who keep their places of business open on the Sabbath and on Sunday as well? Many realize the insidious danger of such flagrant violations of the Sabbath, but as yet only a feeble effort has been made to check them. If the rich, who are the employers of the poor, could be influenced, some effective work might be accomplished.

The fact that there is no provision made for religious instruction of the girls, except through their home training, led the Chicago Section of the Council of Jewish Women to open a Sabbath school for them. It was successful from the start. Three hundred girls took advantage of the opportunity afforded; many more were turned away for lack of accommodation. Sinai Congregation contributed the greater part of the funds and finally took the school under its supervision. The sessions are held weekly on Sabbath afternoons from 2 to 4 o'clock in the Jewish Manual Training School. There are now over 400 pupils in attendance.

A few of the residents who understand the needs of the district have started a religious school where 200 boys and girls receive instruction in Hebrew, Jewish history and religion; but the school is yet in its infancy and struggling for existence owing to lack of financial backing. Sessions are held twice a week.

Another hopeful sign of an awakening to the needs of the present day was the opening of a religious school by the Chicago Zion Gate, Order Knights of Zion. About 150 boys and girls attend this school, which holds its sessions on Sabbaths and Sundays. Fifty of the older boys have organized a club called Sons of American Zionists, and have bought out of their own treasury a small library of Jewish books in the English language. English is used by the teachers and modern methods prevail in the school. Hebrew songs are included in the course of instruction. There should be many such schools not only for weekly but for daily sessions, and where girls as well as boys are welcome. But help must come from outside the district, for the drain upon the income of the residents is already too great.

The Zionist movement is also one of the causes which has led to a religious awakening, and has resolved itself

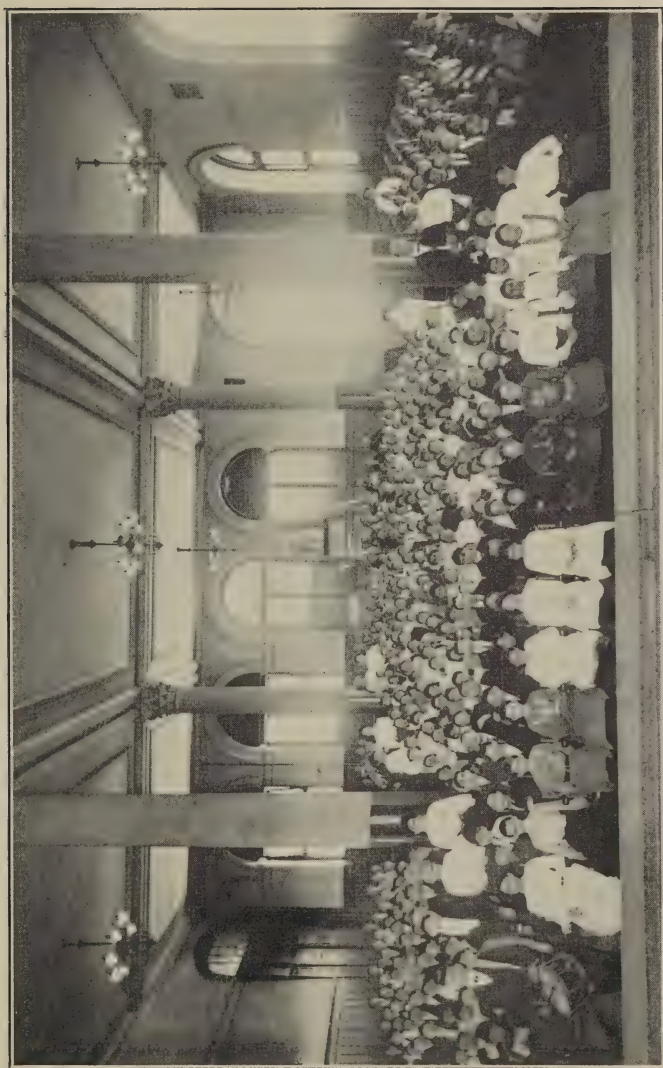


largely into an educational revival, chiefly on matters of Jewish interest. Although the older people have not to a great extent joined the movement, their sympathies have been enlisted; the young people, however, grasped its great significance, and many who had drifted away from Judaism have been won back, have begun to take an interest in Jewish subjects, and to study the Jewish situation. The Zion societies study Jewish history and literature and the Hebrew language, and do literary and social work. After the second Basle Congress the success and stability of fraternal orders in America being noted, the order Knights of Zion was organized, and has proven successful. It consists of a number of Gates. The Chicago Zion Gate, besides holding study meetings for its own members, opened the religious school referred to. The Kadimoh Gate, composed of young men, conducts a reading room and gives courses of Friday evening lectures on Jewish topics. The Clara De Hirsch Gate has a Bible class and furnishes a teacher for the religious school. In fact, wherever a Zion organization is formed some kind of religious study is introduced, and the seeds sown will undoubtedly bear fruit in the future, for the Jewish consciousness has been aroused. These Zionist societies and other fraternal orders, in conjunction with the Hebrew Literary Association, the Self Educational Club, the Beaconsfield and sundry social clubs, together with the co-operation of the rabbis of the city, and the Council of Jewish Women, could by united action maintain a young people's synagogue and daily religious schools free from the objections urged against the chedarim. The younger generation would attend in large numbers and the children would be kept from the evil influences of the street and the alley.

The Rabbinical Association has made the experiment of holding Friday evening services in the Jewish Manual Training School, and reports sufficient encouragement to warrant continuance.

The young people are aroused to the importance of action. This is evidenced by their interest in a movement which is now launched by them for a Chicago Hebrew Institute that shall include synagogue, religious schools, classes, clubs, gymnasium, and the various forms of modern culture and entertainment, physical, moral and intellectual, under Jewish auspices, with the doors open for

worship, study, and recreation. The time is ripe for such a movement. The Russian Jews are overburdened by their obligations. The young people, particularly, need intelligent, unselfish, enthusiastic leadership. Who will become the torch-bearer to this people, singularly gifted with religious enthusiasm and respect for scholarship?



BARON DE HIRSCH CLASSES, IN ENGLISH, FOR JEWISH IMMIGRANT  
CHILDREN

*Educational Alliance, New York*



GROUP OF SCHOOL CHILDREN—ALL JEWS

*Public School, Woodbine, N. J.*



**VI**

**EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCES**

## EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCES

### (A) NEW YORK

The agencies at work for the education of the Russian Jew in New York are so various that their mere enumeration would extend, in all probability, over a whole page of this present volume. In the wider sense attaching to the word education at the present day there would have to be included in such an enumeration more than a passing reference to the conditions, physical, industrial, and moral, in which the lives of the Jewish immigrant and his children are set. The mere geography of his environment, when consideration is had for its effect upon overcrowding, could not be ignored. The influence of the shop, of the home, and of the society about him, would have to be examined and estimated if one would gain a correct conclusion concerning the education — in this, its wider sense — which the Jew is receiving in the process of his transformation from an Old-World subject into a citizen of the New.

It is not, however, primarily with this wider aspect of the educational problem that the present paper has to do. In its narrower sense, education includes only those agencies that are consciously at work for the training of mind, body or character. In a sense narrower still, the term education is sometimes confined to the first of these three — the training of the mind; but since the discoveries of Froebel and Pestalozzi of the value of the children's play-hour, to say nothing of the possibilities of character-building through direct moral instruction, this would be held but an unsatisfactory definition of the province of human life over which education, as a science, is set in authority.

Such conscious agencies for the education of the people are everywhere divided into three classes:— (1) the State directed; (2) those instituted and carried on by private philanthropists whether in societies or as individuals; and

(3) those arising from the people themselves. To one or another of these three classes may be referred every effort making at present for the education of the Russian Jew in New York.

Of course the first of all such agencies, in the extent of its influence, is the public school. There are public schools in New York, which, on the Day of Atonement, or some other religious holiday, are almost emptied of their pupils. A reference to the subjoined table<sup>1</sup> will give ample evi-

SCHOOL	LOCATION	REGISTRATION	NO. JEWS	PER CENT. JEWS
131	272 2nd St.	1496	1448	99
79	42 1st St.	2197	1800	82
13 }	{ 239 E. Houston St.	951 (G. D.)	893	94
13 }	{ 239 E. Houston St.	2203 (P. D.)	2140	97
22 }	{ Stanton and Sheriff Sts.	1267 (B. D.)	1238	98
22 }	{ Stanton and Sheriff Sts.	2607 (P. D.)	2575	99
174	125 Attorney St.	1925	1897	98
20 }	{ Rivington and Eldridge Sts.	2474 (B. D.)	2411	97
20 }	{ Rivington and Eldridge Sts.	2168 (G. D.)	2073	96
160 }	{ Rivington and Suffolk Sts.	1482 (B. D.)	1471	99
160 }	{ Rivington and Suffolk Sts.	1806 (P. D.)	1797	99
4	Rivington and Ridge Sts.	2183	2178	99
88	Rivington and Lewis Sts.	2895	2766	96
140	116 Norfolk St.	1617	1610	99
161	Delancey and Ludlow Sts.	1797	1784	99
92	Broome and Ridge Sts.	1741	1705	96
120	187 Broome St.	761	741	91
34 }	{ Broome and Sheriff Sts.	992 (B. D.)	914	92
34 }	{ Broome and Sheriff Sts.	1940 (P. D.)	1903	98
110	Broome and Cannon Sts.	1654	1391	84
137	Grand and Ludlow Sts.	1565	1552	99
75 }	{ 25 Norfolk St.	756 (B. D.)	743	98
75 }	{ 25 Norfolk St.	1527 (P. D.)	1416	93
7 }	{ Hester and Chrystie Sts.	1744 (B. D.)	1687	97
7 }	{ Hester and Chrystie Sts.	1633 (G. D.)	1558	95
42 }	{ Hester and Orchard Sts.	1365 (P. D.)	1347	98
42 }	{ Hester and Orchard Sts.	1320 (G. D.)	1303	99
144	Hester and Allen Sts.	1723	1704	99
1 }	{ Henry and Catharine Sts.	1324 (B. D.)	938	71
1 }	{ Henry and Catharine Sts.	1493 (G. D.)	1077	72
2	116 Henry St.	3256	3238	96
147	289 E. Broadway	2933	2732	93
12	371 Madison St.	2011	1748	87
177 }	{ Monroe and Market Sts.	1056 (G. D.)	1032	98
177 }	{ Monroe and Market Sts.	1502 (P. D.)	1409	94
136	68 Monroe St.	630	620	98
31	Monroe and Gouverneur Sts.	2144	2105	98
112	83 Roosevelt St.	467	59	12
		64,605	61,103	

dence of this. The preponderance of Jewish pupils over all others in the schools situated below Houston Street on the East Side is so overwhelming as to render of compara-

<sup>1</sup> The table was made up by the editor from a record of the registration and attendance of each of the schools on October 1st, 1903, which was the Jewish Day of Atonement of that year.

Of the total of 64,605 pupils in the district, 61,103, or 94.5 per cent., are Jews.

tively little value questions directed to the teachers concerning the relative scholarship and aptitude of Jewish and non-Jewish pupils, unless these teachers have had experience elsewhere. Nevertheless, there is much in the testimony of teachers to confirm the prevailing impression that these pupils—the children, for the most part, of poor Jewish immigrants from Russia—are among the brightest in attendance at the public schools. Certainly they rank high in all examinations for advancement to the secondary institutions of learning such as the high schools and city college,—and this not merely, it may be believed, because of a keener instinct of competition. American boys have this instinct in an equal degree, although it may be true that it is more strongly developed in the young Jew than in other children of foreign birth or parentage. In itself, and provided that it submits to correction, it may be little more than the index of an alert mind.

In spite of the bad industrial conditions prevailing among the Jews of the lower East Side, the parents, or if not the parents, the children themselves are quick to avail themselves of whatever privileges their new surroundings extend to them. Among these the privilege of most worth is the education offered them, and they are not slow to appreciate its advantages. The children begin their attendance at the public school within a very short time after their arrival here, the younger ones finding their way into the numerous kindergartens connected with private institutions. Very soon, especially to the little girls, the public school teacher becomes a strong, in many instances the strongest, influence in the lives of these children. They learn to look upon her as a model of good taste—first, it is true, chiefly in external things, such as clothes and manner of speech,—but afterwards, very often, as a pattern of deportment as well. Happy the teacher who can “live up to” the ideal that has been formed of her! These children, most teachers report, are singularly docile,—not the girls only, but the boys as well. In some cases, indeed, this docility amounts to a defect (of which, however, teachers are not wont to complain),—the children seeming to lack those healthy instincts for mischievous play that are the accompaniment of happier childhood. Later, however, when the influence of the street (not always a bad one) has had time to make itself apparent, they are



apt to develop the high spirits that are a prerogative of their years.

Of the interest and ability displayed by these children of the public school age, let some of their teachers speak:

"Jewish children, as a rule, are bright, attentive and studious."

"They are generally anxious to learn, and except in English, compare favorably with other nationalities."

"They rank among the highest. They are far more earnest and ambitious [than other scholars] and many of them supplement their school work with outside reading."

"As a race, their ability to comprehend instruction is excellent. The poorer class of Jewish children is ahead of the poorer class of other nationalities. They are not so smart (?) as the average American, but have greater emotional capacity. They are more receptive than self-active."

Other teachers have observed no marked distinction between their pupils of Jewish birth and those belonging to other races.

Concerning the scholarship developed, the teacher last quoted says, "They seem to grasp 'beautiful ideas' eagerly. Manual training they enjoy."

Other opinions are:

"They have a special aptitude for studies that appeal to the imagination, while matters of fact excite less interest."

"They excel in mathematics, English and history. They are deficient in drawing and shop-work."

"Their scholarship is affected, I think, by their ignorance of other surroundings than those to which they are habituated. . . . There is a decided lack of the power of concentration and steady application, owing, probably, to a very nervous temperament. The study of good English poetry seems to have developed a writing in rhyme, in a good percentage; in the few, it is even poetry,"—but the same teacher adds, in another place, "We rarely find the artistic temperament except as expressing itself in music."

Most teachers agree that the young Jewish children are exceedingly patriotic, although it is suggested that the patriotism must be, in some cases, of a merely imitative order, considering the tender age at which it is developed. One principal expresses the opinion that the Jewish boys of the East Side "are born politicians and their chief in-

terest in American institutions arises from the fact that they furnish an area for political contests." Certainly the East Side boy grows up in a perilous atmosphere, politically considered, and too often develops into the thing to which we need not believe him born. This public school "patriotism," of which we hear so much, is by no means a product deserving of unqualified praise. With no desire to disparage the good work of the schools in familiarizing the little foreigner with the more elementary of those ideas that lie at the root of the national political institutions, it is doubtful whether in practice he is not very often imbued with a military chauvinism very far removed from the true spirit of American patriotism. We are all rather prone to forget that it is the coarser side of any abstract proposition that inevitably impresses itself upon the minds of boys, of whatever nationality, and that the concrete image that is carried away from this "patriotic" cult is apt to be the mere drum-beating and flag raising that makes such easy and instant appeal to instincts but little allied to those of justice, fair-play, and an elevated love for humanity as a whole.

Coming back to the subject of the proficiency, as well as the special aptitudes, displayed by the Russian Jewish children in the public schools as compared with those of other nationalities, it does not appear to the present writer that sufficient material is at hand to warrant the formation of a judgment having much claim to accuracy. As a general rule, and taking into consideration the moral as well as the mental qualities that go to the formation of good scholarship, it will probably be found that the best scholars come from the best homes. Now the Jewish people have long been celebrated for the beauty of their family life, and we should therefore expect them to furnish a good percentage of the best scholarship realized in the schools; but it cannot be disputed that the homes of too many of the recent refugees from Russia, Roumania, and other European countries, partly by reason of industrial conditions, in part owing to a moral break-down incident to the upturning of the tradition of centuries, have ceased to be homes at all in the true sense of the word, and it would be unfair to look to the children of these dwellings for an exemplification of the highest attainable type of scholarship. Often, indeed, individual scholars come surprisingly near it, especially on the intellectual side, and

it is no part of the writer's purpose to suggest that as a class they fall farther below it than the equally unfortunate of other nationalities.

It seems clear that whatever the defects of the scholarship realized, they are attributable as much to the teacher and to the system employed as to the pupils. Considering the responsiveness of Jewish children to imaginative stimuli of one variety or another, it would seem desirable to emphasize to a greater degree than is done in other matters such as the training of the power of observation and the cultivation of habits of application. These receive admirable illustration in the system of manual training afforded by the work shops, but the work shops are few in number, and there seems at present but little disposition on the part of the school authorities to increase them and extend their efficiency. The probability is, if this were done, that they would form an admirable corrective to the too exclusively intellectual activity of the class-rooms.

One of the great aims of all education, undoubtedly, is to develop the true individuality of the child; and it is not surprising that but little attention can be devoted to this in the overcrowded class-rooms of our public schools. But sometimes directly wrong methods are adopted, as when a teacher encourages in a forward or self-conscious child the tendencies that require stimulation in an unduly retiring or modest one. There seems to be a smaller proportion of bashfulness among Jewish children than among those of other nationalities, and therefore less need to have resort to devices, such as public declamation and quotation-citing, designed to overcome this evil. I have often been present at such exhibitions in down-town school-houses where the display of vanity and of a certain self-conscious forwardness inconsistent with the modesty of childhood was painful in the extreme, and I have observed such a display more frequently among the little girls than among their little brothers.

The story is told (by President G. Stanley Hall, I think) of a class of children in a Boston school, the majority of whom believed the real size of a cow to be the space occupied by its picture in their spelling books. This points a finger at the city child's ordinary ignorance of nature and country surroundings, and we should expect to find this ignorance intensified in the little Jewish children whose lives have been confined within such narrow city



boundaries as limit the district cramped on two sides by the river, and on a third side by the Bowery, that broad and dangerous thoroughfare which an unwritten rule forbids the younger children ever to cross. The remedy for this is not school, but more parks and open air life, and the remedy is being rapidly applied, every year adding to the number of parks and open-air play grounds. The Jewish people are generous patrons of the parks, and with the natural intelligence of the children, it is probable that the defect of experience which at present hampers some departments of the school work will tend more and more to disappear.

When we come to a consideration of the secondary schools, we are struck with the large percentage of Jewish scholars and their relatively high rank, particularly in examination tests. Of course, a considerable proportion of these students are the children of parents who have been settled long in this country, and are not, therefore, to be identified with the class we are studying, but in the recently established boys' high schools, the children of recent Jewish immigrants numbered about 41 per cent. when inquiry was made. These high schools (both for boys and girls) are doing an excellent work, both in filling a need long unsupplied in the city's educational system, and in setting the pace for a higher standard than has hitherto prevailed in such institutions as the City College (for boys) and the Normal College (for girls). The high school teachers speak in the highest terms of the natural ability and persistence of their pupils of Russian Jewish origin and have many instances to relate of hardships overcome by boy and girl scholars in their struggle for an education. The girls, in especial, seem anxious to make up for every lesson they are compelled to lose, and after the holidays would keep the teachers occupied until the late evening of every day hearing omitted recitations, had not a rule been adopted excusing their absences. It is not with the grade of scholarship attained by their pupils that criticism (if criticism there is to be) need concern itself, so much as with the motive and spirit at work beneath their activity. That the motive of commercial advantage holds a very high place in the whole movement is the common testimony of teachers. Parents who are themselves at a disadvantage as compared with their neighbors would naturally be quick to respond to such a motive in behalf of their



children, and there are many indications that a lively realization of this is present with the children as well. The instinct of success, so strong in the Jewish people, accounts for much prize-taking and high standing in the class-room, but for the formation of a finer type of scholarship there is necessary the cultivation of a greater degree of disinterestedness. The comparative absence of such a quality (difficult, indeed, of development under the prevailing industrial conditions) is what constitutes the principal flaw in the scholarship at present attained by the children of Jewish immigrants. That it will tend to disappear as a more comfortable material standard is realized, is easy to believe when we bethink ourselves of the strain of ideality, the endowment of imaginative power, that exists side by side in their souls with the instinct for material advancement.

Two institutions, already mentioned (the City College and the Normal College), stand at the head of the city's free educational system and in both the attendance of Jewish pupils is very large. These two institutions, together with the Training School for teachers, a state institution, supply the great majority of the new teachers who are received each year into the city's public school system. What proportion of these new teachers are Russian Jews would be an interesting inquiry, were the facts accessible. That the teaching profession is an attractive one to the children of these immigrants admits of no doubt whatever. The only real question concerns the degree of its attractiveness as compared with other professions, such as law and medicine, and this is difficult to determine, among other reasons, for the economic one that the pursuit of all special studies involves an outlay of time and money beyond what is commonly expended upon obtaining the qualifications necessary for a teacher's equipment.

Finally, with respect to the higher learning, the great increase in the number of Jews in attendance upon the classes at Columbia and the University of New York has been the subject of recent remark. That this increase is drawn from the class of recent immigrants is, on the face of it, probable, and can be easily demonstrated by a reference to the secondary schools of which these pupils are graduates. Nor is the number confined to those who are pursuing the full university course, since many whose economic position compelled them to accept employment as

teachers or otherwise supplement their earlier training by attending special courses held at hours adapted to their convenience.

Coming now to the private agencies at work in New York for the education and spiritual advancement of the Russian Jews, we find a great number, of which it will only be possible, within our present limits, to go into particulars concerning a few. Some of these institutions are supported and managed by American Jews for the benefit of their co-religionists from Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe; others are conducted entirely by non-Jews on a completely non-sectarian basis, and the people sought to be benefited avail themselves, without distinction, of both. This readiness to embrace the opportunities offered, combined with the keen intellectual curiosity of the race, has rendered this people, in the opinion of many, the most promising of all in the field of social experiment.

The largest single work of the character now under discussion is carried on in New York by the Educational Alliance,—a union, originally, of three societies, Jewish in their membership, established to bring culture within the reach of the more destitute of the race. The consistent aim of this institution, since its foundation, has been the Americanization of the foreign Jew, and the first steps in this process (the English classes for immigrants) have followed closely upon the earlier Baron de Hirsch classes, long housed in the building of the Alliance. In these classes it happens not seldom that children are found on the very day of their landing in America. They are regularly prepared, both as regards language and scholarship, to enter the class at the public school appropriate to their age. During the season of the year when the public evening schools are closed, evening classes for immigrants are opened by the Alliance, so that no time may be lost in the acquisition of the first requisite of intelligent citizenship.

But besides these elementary classes designed to meet the needs of the immigrants and their young children, there are classes for nearly every grade of culture, the subject-list including languages, literature, history, civics, mathematics, natural science, music, cookery, book-keeping, drawing, millinery, typewriting, philosophy, gymnastics, and religion. At first the most successful of these classes were those that addressed themselves to a practical result

— the enabling of pupils to pass the state, or regents' examinations in specified subjects. A change, greatly to be commended, has recently been introduced, to favor the classes designed to stimulate general culture, with the result that "cramming" for an examination is now discouraged. As a result, principally, of the influence of the late Prof. Thomas Davidson and Mr. Edward King, a group of earnest students of the higher laws of history and social science has been formed, and some of these are beginning to take an active part in the conduct of the outlying portions of the institution's work. There is some reason to suppose that too great leniency was observed at first in the matter of permitting students to select at random the classes they preferred to attend, the evil showing itself in a constant shifting interest from one subject to another, as one or another enthusiasm predominated in an unripe brain. Greater systemization and a limitation upon the number of classes permitted to be attended by a single pupil have assisted in reducing this tendency. The building of the Alliance includes an assembly-hall, a library and a gymnasium in addition to its class, club and play-rooms, and lectures (for the most part under the auspices of the Board of Education), entertainments, exhibitions, and concerts follow one another in quick succession through the winter and spring months. In particular, the concert feature has been carefully developed, the resources of the neighborhood being drawn upon to form a promising chorus and orchestra. Picture exhibitions have also been held, and one was held in which the work of East Side artists alone was illustrated. On Sunday afternoons children's entertainments have been held, while legal holidays and Jewish festivals are always honored with appropriate observances. A comparatively recent departure has been to open the building on Friday evenings for social purposes only.

The three leading social settlements of the lower East Side are the Nurses', College, and University Settlements, the first two having women as residents, the third having men. Of the work of these institutions it is, perhaps, correct to say that it is individual rather than general, intensive rather than widespread.

The children that begin in the kindergarten and grow up through a whole series of clubs, coming to the house of the settlement for most of the amusement and some little



of the discipline of their most impressionable years, have a chance to acquire something that shall exert a profound influence upon their future lives. The danger is lest they come to regard themselves as a society apart, by reason of an external superiority of manners and taste, or, escaping that, lest they mistake the refinement of settlement life for the end in itself and content themselves with an effort to realize that, careless of the more pressing considerations that occupy their less privileged neighbors. But though such dangers exist, the young men and women are numerous who owe to the settlement an enlarged purpose and a more satisfying outlook upon the world than they would have been likely to obtain, at least so early in their lives, without its instrumentality. Except among the clubs of the youngest there is little direct instruction in any settlement with which I happen to be acquainted,—and this not because it was undesired, but because classes did not seem to flourish in the atmosphere of sociability and light-hearted amusement that usually prevailed there. But all the more, on this account, is the influence permeative, that it does not seem to come in the way made familiar, and therefore disliked, of the instruction in school, but rather to be distilled through the medium of games, conversation, etc., until it is unconsciously absorbed. Therefore I think that the little immigrant children of the East Side who have drifted into the settlements (only a very small proportion of the whole) have come out of them again much modified in character, purposes, opinions—in nearly every way.

The value of a technical training for boys, fitting them to practice the mechanical trades, has been recognized by Jewish philanthropists as having a special application to their race, by reason of some inherited deficiencies in this regard; and in illustration of their belief two admirable institutions—the Hebrew Technical Institute and the Baron de Hirsch Trade School have come into existence in New York. The first of these, the Technical Institute, does not teach boys a trade, but takes them at an early age (twelve and a half years) and instructs them in such studies as will be most likely to fit them for success in mechanical pursuits. For the first two years this instruction is quite general in character, but during the last year they are permitted to specialize their studies in the direction of the particular taste they may have acquired, without



actually studying a trade. The studies necessary to the development of a general intelligence — English, mathematics and history — are maintained throughout the three-year course, and along with them goes a graduated instruction in wood-work, free hand and mechanical drawing, metal work, and applied science. The tuition, tools, and text-books are all furnished free, together with shower baths, bathing forming part of the exercises, and the only charge made in connection with the institution is that of one cent a day, or five cents a week, for the warm lunch provided in the school refectory. The present number of pupils is 249, and the school has 476 living graduates, of whom 72 per cent. are following mechanical work.

At the Baron de Hirsch Trade School the instruction is also free, but the applicant for admission, who must be sixteen years old, must show that he has some means of support while learning the trade. The aim of the school is to afford a working knowledge of one of the following trades: Plumbing and gas-fitting, carpentry, house painting, sign-painting, machinist and electrician. The time taken to acquire this knowledge is five and one-half months, the first portion of the course being devoted to a teaching of the principles of the trade and the latter part to their practical application. A preference is given, in the matter of admission, to Jewish boys born in Russia and Roumania, and statistics taken from seven successive classes show that these boys form about 48.3 per cent. of the whole number of graduates, the other pupils of foreign birth numbering 19.2 per cent., while 32.5 per cent. are Jewish boys born in the United States. Over 77 per cent. of the graduates of the previous five years were reported in 1899 to be still working at the trades learned in the school.

Closely adjoining the boys' trade school is the Training School for Girls, instituted by Baroness de Hirsch. This contains 35 training girls, who live there all the time and receive instruction in millinery, cooking, washing, machine-operating, hand-sewing, and dress-making, besides sheltering some 65 more working girls, who pay three dollars a week for their board. Provision is made for 30 free scholars. The institution is non-sectarian, Baroness de Hirsch having prescribed as a condition to this gift that ten per cent. of the inmates should be Gentiles.

The trade education for girls is looked out for by the

Hebrew Technical School for Girls, which has a commercial department, containing, according to the last report, 108 pupils, and one of manual training, containing 45 pupils. The girls attending this school are about fifteen years old, and are all graduates of the public schools. The aim of the commercial department is to turn out good assistant book-keepers and stenographers; and the graduates readily secure positions. The graduates of the manual training department are also making profitable use of their knowledge. The school is quite strict in its requirements both at entrance and graduation, no girl being received who cannot pass a good examination in English, and diplomas being refused to those whose proficiency in the subjects taught has not come up to the standard. The school has grown very rapidly, and looks forward to a career of growing usefulness.

The passage over from institutions of the character of those just described to efforts at educational improvement having their origin in the people themselves may well come through the People's Singing Classes, an institution having some of the better elements of both, but more of the latter than the former. The impulse for the formation of this great union of working-people for the study of song came, indeed, not from the people, but from its present director, Mr. Frank Damrosch; and he and his assistants supply the necessary instruction without pecuniary compensation, but this not from the motive of charity, so much as out of a disinterested love of the musical art and a desire for its dissemination among the people. The people, on their side, pay the entire expenses of the movement, which has never received a contribution from anyone outside of it, and undertake besides its entire management, electing its officers and committees, who gratuitously give in its service the time snatched from their working-hours. It may, therefore, be best described as a great co-partnership for the furtherance of a given end—the extension of the love and culture of music among the working-people; a co-partnership to which each contributes what is his to give, and in which none feels himself the recipient of charity. Music is still the art to which the mass of mankind is most strongly inclined, and when compared with the plastic arts—painting, sculpture and architecture—the appeal appears to be relatively stronger in the Jewish race than among other peoples. Certainly, some of the

most earnest and enthusiastic workers in the musical cause since the inception of the People's Singing Classes have come from the Russian Jewish population of the lower East Side.

Among what may be called the native forces at work for the education of the Russian Jew a high place must be assigned to the socialist propaganda. The mind of many a young man, depressed by the soul-deadening conditions of a sweat-shop existence, would never have awakened to the higher life of the intellect in response to any stimulus less immediate and personal than that extended by the socialist theories of society. Clubs and classes innumerable for the study of economics and history, science and literature, have grown up in the work of the socialist movement, and if the knowledge acquired was often one-sided, because studied in the shadow of a theory to which all the facts must be made to conform, still the ideal of a regenerated society was present to inspire other faculties than the intellect. Unfortunately for their cause, many of the older socialists adopted methods of propaganda modeled more upon German than American patterns, and this forfeited the sympathy of a young element that grew up in closer touch with American ideas.

Anyone who knows the East Side knows that it swarms with clubs almost as much as it swarms with sweat-shops and peddlers' carts. Some of them owe their origin to the schoolroom, to the settlement, or to the stray philanthropist who affords them "a local habitation and a name," but a vast host of them are of spontaneous generation, and constitute an expression of needs that are not the less genuine because sometimes unconscious. Boys' and girls' clubs are so numerous that lately the school authorities have been brought to see the wisdom of opening a limited number of school-buildings in the evening to serve as "play-centres" and to supply the want for club space. It is noticeable that nearly all of these open schools are on the lower East Side, the demand for them in other parts of the city being as yet comparatively small. The boys' clubs nearly all indulge in debates and have a "literary" programme, one of the elected officers being usually an "editor," who conducts a manuscript journal in which original matter may appear together with quotations from well-known writers, the whole being liberally seasoned with "jokes." Much oratory and some juvenile eloquence

is developed in the debates, and the effect of this upon the bright boys of the race is generally bad, since it is apt to start them upon careers of law and politics which, under prevailing conditions, tend rapidly to corrupt the truthful and scrupulous instincts of youth. Circles for quiet study are more rare, but these do exist, and excellent work of a public character such as that accomplished by Col. Waring's Street-Cleaning Brigade, has been done by boys' clubs, but this usually under the direction of a leader from without. The little girls' clubs, while far more restricted in their interests than the boys', are subject to fewer temptations and under the influence of reading and quiet work, have been productive of much good to their members. At a later age, these clubs, both youths' and maidens' divide sharply into two classes, one of which is inspired by an ideal of some abstract subject or of one connected with their particular trade or employment, the other by an ideal of pleasure with which is sometimes connected a charitable purpose. In clubs of the first class earnest work is often accomplished, though there is apt to come a time in the life of every such club when the personal interests of its members, love and the starting of individual careers, come to interrupt the course of its activity. Among the older people, no clubs or associations for mutual improvement other than of a material order, as exemplified in the lodges and benevolent societies, exist. A league of young men's clubs under the title of "Federation of East Side Clubs" has recently been formed for discussion and action upon matters of common interest affecting the welfare of the neighborhood, and much good is to be anticipated from the existence of such a body.

In the foregoing review of the educational influences at work among the Russian Jews of New York, nothing has been said of the libraries — Astor, Columbia, New York Free Circulating, and others — to which they have resort in so great numbers. If the place to speak of libraries is not wholly that assigned to influences of self-help, it comes pretty close to being so. The library, indeed, is provided by others, but nothing can make it of service to the people if they do not themselves manifest the disposition to use it. This disposition is certainly present in a large proportion of the recent Jewish immigrants, even among many who are seriously hampered in the struggle for learning by the economic conditions of their lives. It is this



disposition, developed into an attitude habitual to them in the face of every opportunity with which they are brought into contact, joined to their natural ability, that will vindicate the claim of the Russian Jewish people to a high place among the intellectually-disposed nations of the earth.

## (B) PHILADELPHIA

The observer of conditions in the lower section of the city is surprised by the remarkable intellectual interest of the Russian Jew. Accustomed to associate a low intellectual plane with a low economic plane, and to expect a lack of learning where there is a lack of the order and grace of the well-clad and the outwardly polished, he is surprised that amid the so-called "slum" population there should be a people who have a high standard of ability, an intense desire to acquire knowledge, and great strength of purpose in carrying it out. To class this people as to educational ideals with the mass of low class American residents, the foreign immigrants, and the negroes among whom they live, is to misunderstand their history and their aspirations.

It is the purpose of this study to examine the attitude of Russian Jews toward education as it is indicated in the institutions here, and to ascertain the effect which these institutions are having on their individual and social development.

Probably no single agency has a more far-reaching educational influence, especially in molding ideas in accordance with the standards of our country and our time, than the public school. It gives to the son of the immigrant the same advantages as to the son of the native born, and in many instances the transformation to similarity with the latter is swift and complete.

One of the most striking features which the free educational development of the country has helped to bring about is the difference in habit of mind between parent and child. The parents are usually too old, too set, and too depressed by economic conditions to acquire the English language and to adapt themselves to the ways of the English-speaking people. But they give their children the opportunity; and these seize it with great eagerness and determination.

The teachers of the schools in the lower section of the

city, are, as a rule, so far as I have been able to gather, pleased, on the whole, with the Jewish pupils. They are impressed with their keenness and alertness, and regard them as better material than other pupils of foreign parentage or birth. The Jewish pupils come to school with the disadvantage of hearing a foreign tongue spoken in their homes. This disadvantage once overcome, they are abreast of the best American-born pupils.

I visited a vacation school class in the southern section where the pupils were as neat, clean, and bright as could any where be found. There was no appearance of "slumminess" such as the up-town resident would look for. The principal of the school explained that as the vacation school was regarded as privileged, there being not room enough for all who applied, the parents took particular pains to have their children present a tidy appearance. The principal, for my benefit, asked all who were Jews to raise their hands. Up went the hands of nearly the whole class of youngsters, a showing which alike surprised the principal, the teacher, and me. In the other classes of the vacation school the attendance of Jewish pupils was also large and their general appearance attractive.

Some of the teachers of the public schools take a strong personal interest in the pupils. Where the parents seem short-sighted they endeavor to influence them, so that the children shall be kept at school with regularity and shall not be taken from school till they have completed the several grades. Where they observe special proficiency they try to have it developed. An instance of this is the sending of pupils to the Industrial Art School. They see much latent ability, which owing to the rush and push of our hurried life cannot be developed; and its possessors are doomed to eke out a humdrum existence.

In one of the poorest localities a principal informed me that the instances were rare in which the pupils of her school proceeded to the higher schools. Economic pressure apparently compelled the parents to take their children from the schools as they reached the higher grades.

With the betterment of economic conditions among the Russian Jewish people, there has been a steady growth of attendance in the upper grades, the higher schools, and the professional institutions. Our high schools and colleges are enrolling a remarkably large number of Russian Jewish pupils, who show a high standard of scholar-

ship, of which a noteworthy indication in the past few years has been the securing of prizes and honors.

The following compilation made up of data furnished by the principals of the respective schools shows the total number of pupils and the proportion that are Jews, in the section bounded by Locust Street on the north, Moore Street on the south, the Delaware River on the east, and Nineteenth Street on the west,—a district comprising the greater portion of the Russian Jewish community of the city.

The result shows that of a total of 21,485 pupils in the public schools of the described area, measuring about two square miles, 11,683, or 54.4 per cent., are Jews.<sup>1</sup>

SCHOOL	LOCATION	PER	
		NO.	CENT.
		TOTAL	JEW
Locust Street	12th and Locust Sts.	175	38
Horace Binney	Spruce below 6th St.	935	700
Horace Binney Kindergarten	Spruce below 6th St.	34	26
J. S. Ramsey	Pine and Marvin Sts.	408	4
U. S. Grant	17th and Pine Sts.	307	24
Alice Lippincott	19th below Pine St.	500	90
George M. Wharton	3rd below Pine St.	1345	1210
George M. Wharton Kindergarten	307 Lombard St.	68	66
James Forten	6th above Lombard St.	633	576
James Forten Kindergarten	502 S. Front St.	38	30
Ralston (Boys)	American and Bainbridge Sts.	197	171
Ralston (Girls)	American and Bainbridge Sts.	220	198
Kindergarten	208 Bainbridge St.	69	65
Kindergarten	705 S. 112th St.	31	18
Wm. M. Meredith	5th and Fitzwater Sts.	1011	950
James Campbell	8th and Fitzwater Sts.	1560	782
Fagen	12th and Fitzwater Sts.	585	285
Mt. Vernon	Catharine above 3rd St.	1200	1070
Beck	Catharine above 6th St.	301	181
Beck Kindergartens	Catharine above 6th St.	63	30
Florence	Catharine below 8th St.	650	325
Lyons	Catharine above 10th St.	840	350
Lyons Kindergarten	Catharine above 10th St.	41	1
Fletcher	Christian above Front St.	958	755
Kindergarten	924 S. 9th St.	120	...
Geo. W. Nebinger	6th and Carpenter Sts.	1158	671
Washington	Carpenter above 9th St.	1338	30
Watson Kindergarten	League below 2nd St.	67	54
Wharton	5th St. below Wash'ton Av.	1885	1411
John Stockdale	13th St. below Wash'ton Av.	258	17
John Stockdale Kindergarten	13th and Alter Sts.	30	3
Weccacoe	2nd and Reed Sts.	603	145
Henry Clay	S. Howard above Reed St.	356	122
Henry Clay Kindergarten	S. Howard above Reed St.	70	33
John P. Baugh	Dickinson above 6th St.	797	329
C. S. Close	7th and Dickinson Sts.	940	460
Tasker	9th and Tasker Sts.	607	200
Morris	Morris below 2nd St.	526	44
Francis Read	11th and Moore Sts.	561	179
		21,485	11,683

<sup>1</sup> In 1899, of the total number of pupils, 17,000 in round figures, in practically the same territory, about 7,500, or 45 per cent. were Jews.



One principal, in whose school nearly one half of the pupils were Jews, said: "A close study for years with these children enables me to make the statements from actual knowledge. Of all foreign children, the Jews are to be preferred as citizens of the future." The response to the specific queries was as follows on the part of this principal; the questions being those put in each case where inquiry was made:

Q. "How do the Jewish pupils compare in scholarship with those of other nationalities?"

A. "Very much above all others in behavior, in aptitude, and general deportment and scholarship."

Q. "Their interest in American institutions?"

A. "Great interest in anything patriotic."

Q. "Encouragement of parents toward education?"

A. "Most liberally encouraged and urged to become proficient."

Another, in whose school a large majority of the pupils were Jews, wrote: "Only for the difficulty in learning English they would compare very favorably with American children."

A report from a school in which nine-tenths were Jews stated: "The parents attend our school exhibits in large numbers."

In reference to a school in which half were Jews the statement was made that, "They manifest a lively interest in American history and institutions; that the encouragement of education by parents is 'active' and that they are, with remarkably few exceptions, appreciative of effort on the part of the teacher."

The head of a school in which nearly all were Jews wrote: "As a rule brighter and more studious than other nationalities. This is particularly noticeable when we compare them with the Italians."

The comment of a principal, three-fourths of whose pupils were Jews, was: "As a rule, the Jewish children are quick at figures. They are attentive to school work. So many, even of American birth, hear a foreign tongue spoken that the teaching of language is difficult."

A kindergartner of whose pupils all but three were Jews wrote: "I have always considered them very bright and apt. They soon overcome the difficulty of the unknown tongue and make themselves understood."

The replies were almost unanimous in agreeing that the

parents encourage education. From the teachers' standpoint, this means that they take an interest in the school record, attendance, and conduct of their children.

One of the matters of complaint is the failure of many parents to enforce the attendance of children on the days preceding holidays and the Sabbath. Evidently they are required at home to help "clean up" previous to these special days, and both parents and children do not seem to realize the importance of conforming to the school routine when it comes into conflict with some of the set habits of the home. It is suggested that parents' meetings with the teachers would remedy this as well as some other matters connected with school discipline. But the fact that many of the parents do not understand English and most of the teachers know only that language, is an effectual bar to the success of such meetings.

The following observation of a principal should be considered: "They (the parents) encourage the boys, but less interest is shown in the girls. The latter leave at an earlier age." This is quite true and in accordance with ancient orthodox custom. It does not apply to Jews who have adopted the modern occidental point of view.

The children show a decided interest in American institutions so far as the teachers have been able to observe. They learn the patriotic songs and study the history and constitution of the country with the same earnestness as other pupils, and have a general desire to adapt themselves to the prevalent customs and habits. The rapidity of adaptation is in accordance with the cosmopolitanism of the Jew.

The results, on the whole, seem to indicate that the Jewish pupils excel the other pupils with whom they are associated in the lower section of the city, namely, the negroes and those of foreign extraction, chiefly Italians, and that they are fully on an intellectual plane with those of American extraction; that the parents encourage education; and the children show an active interest in the country, and consequently possess the initial elements for becoming intelligent, law-abiding citizens.

In one school, where the children outside of the Jewish, were largely of American parentage, the Jewish pupils showed fully as high a standard of scholarship as the latter. This was brought out by an examination of the averages of boys in the higher grades.

The James Forten Elementary Manual Training School, on Sixth Street above Lombard, was at one time largely attended by negroes. Now over ninety per cent. of the pupils are Jews.<sup>1</sup> There is a large negro population in the neighborhood of this school, which does not patronize it, whereas the Jewish population has taken strong advantage of it. In fact, measured by the test of their neighborhoods, the attendance of Jewish pupils at schools is exceptionally large.

There is a large attendance of Jewish pupils in several of the night schools down-town. At the William M. Meredith, Fifth Street above Fitzwater, fully ninety per cent. of the average attendance is of Jews. In the Mount Vernon, Catharine Street above Third, the percentage is equally large.

It is not my purpose to discuss the efficiency of the public night schools, in this connection, though a careful investigation would, I feel confident, reveal much to criticise. It is certain, however, that the needs and demands of the foreign speaking populations are not adequately considered, when the fact is pointed out that these schools are open but from October to February, three evenings of two hours each to the week, with adjournment during the Christmas holidays. The foreign populations, certainly the Jewish, are eager to learn, and the educational authority is acting against their best interests as citizens, in not giving them a more adequate system of education in the same spirit as that which is accorded the pupils in the day schools. It is because the requirements of the populations are not sufficiently considered in public night school instruction that supplemental teaching in other institutions is made necessary. In the district there are a number of public kindergartens having an attendance of Jewish children varying from two to ninety-seven per cent. of the total number of pupils. In addition there are a few private kindergartens to be considered, among which may be mentioned those of the Young Women's Union, the

<sup>1</sup> "The nationality of the pupils has changed in the last two years in a remarkable degree — instead of a majority of negroes, there is now a preponderance of Russian Jews, who must be taught English before they can enter the regular graded classes. And this adds to the requirements in the teachers. Even in the class now under the care of the school, the well known characteristic of the Jews, that of a carefully guarded family life, is evident, so that the school has much better support from parents than heretofore, and considerable appreciation of the benefits the children receive." *Report of the President of the Board of Education* (Samuel B. Huey) for the year ending December 31st, 1898.

Home of Delight, and the College Settlement (433 Christian Street), in which nearly all the pupils are Jewish. In some respects, the kindergarten is more valuable to the child of foreign origin than to one whose parents are native, for correct language, in accent and tone, can be taught, so that it will not have the disadvantage of some of the older children, whose English is spoilt at home in a way that is sometimes difficult to correct when they come to school.

It has been shown that Russian Jews attend the James Forten Elementary Manual Training School in large numbers. Manual training is regarded as especially valuable for children who live in the densely populated districts and are thus thrown upon the streets. And it is of particular worth for the Jewish people. The teacher of the Sloyd work in this school informed me that the Jewish pupils show full average proficiency, and he has not the failures in drawing to report which were reported in the regular schools. The mind and the hand work in harmony, and the result is not only good finished products, but the formation of a finer finished product in the pupil himself.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Jewish institutions performing an important work in the educational development of the immigrant population is the Hebrew Education Society. In its building, Touro Hall, at Tenth and Carpenter Streets, there is a night school for English branches, in which hundreds are being taught our language. Such a school as this is especially valuable to the newly arriving foreigners, who, with their utter lack of knowledge of the language, would be helpless in most public night schools. Industrial education is pursued in the form of dressmaking, millinery, garment cutting, cigar making, and stenography. The reading room, the library, and the auditorium for lectures and entertainments are valuable adjuncts in the work of this institution. The auditorium, which has a seating capacity for fully six hundred persons, is used by other organizations, without cost to them, for literary and social events. Free religious exercises on New Year's Day and the Day of Atonement are held here under the auspices of the society.

Also located in this building is the Manual Training

<sup>1</sup> See Speirs, *The James Forten School*, an experiment in social regeneration through elementary manual training. Civic Club, Philadelphia, 1901.



School conducted by the B'nai B'rith fraternity. Boys from eleven to sixteen years of age attend. The hours are arranged so that they will not conflict with those of the public schools. Some boys who have attended its classes are assisting in mechanical trades. The work of this school, though small, is important in helping, if ever so little, to turn the trend of development in the direction of manual trades and diversity of occupation.

One of the large schools of the Hebrew Sunday School Society holds its sessions at Touro Hall, the others in the lower section of the city being located in rented halls at Eighth and South and Fourth and South Streets. The largest attendance in the three schools is about twenty-five hundred altogether. The pupils are taught chiefly Bible history.

The Young Women's Union, at 428 Bainbridge Street, is an important centre of influence. It is developing in its personal work. Formerly devoting itself to the day nursery and shelter for young children and to classes conducted along institutional lines, it has been adding the club feature. The young people are formed into small groups, usually with a leader, whose personal contact with the club is valuable in molding the conduct and adapting the point of view of the individuals. Then, too, the Juvenile Aid Association, which takes charge of all matters pertaining to the delinquent young people within the age of those subject to the juvenile court law, has become a most valuable feature of the Union's work. The probation officer who is given charge of all boys and girls brought up in the juvenile court is an appointee of this association. A part of the work of the association which promises good results is the placing out of young delinquents. To recur to the activities of the Union in its building, besides the clubs and the classes, the gymnasium and the library are adjuncts of its work.

The Home of Delight, at 426 Pine Street, embraces a kindergarten, a library and reading room, game rooms, savings bank, classes and clubs. The class work includes sewing, embroidery, drawing and general elementary subjects. The Home serves as a centre of social activity for the people in the northern portion of our southern district. The matron lives in the house with her family.

Among the influences particularly for the young people none has been more important in my judgment than the

Philadelphia College Settlement, at 433 Christian Street. The beneficiaries are chiefly Jews. I have had occasion carefully to study and observe the work for seven years and I can testify to the valuable results which are accomplished — not results, it is true, that can in any adequate degree be put down in tabulated statistical form, but which count for much in the uplifting of the individuals and the upbuilding of their characters. Not only is the personal contact of the residents and their associates with those who come to the settlement promotive of refinement and culture, but the educational value of the class and club work is of decided benefit, especially in broadening the point of view. The games and dances, the concerts and theatricals, the English instruction and discussions are effective means for promoting the finer development of the young people in the hands of the Settlement workers who endeavor to bring into their house an atmosphere of cheer and good breeding. The head worker of the Settlement, Miss Anna F. Davies, has prepared for me the following appreciation: "My experience in the Philadelphia College Settlement has led me to believe that the Russian Jewish population furnishes the element of our congested districts which is most responsive to educational effort. This seems true of the wider education of a social type, the value of which the Settlement especially emphasizes, no less than of instruction pure and simple. Feeling and taste are sensitive, and where there is acquaintance with good standards, will usually and instinctively choose wisely. It is safe to assume that the Jewish applicant for club or class may be appealed to on the mental side; that he has a brain and will enjoy exercising it. To the teacher or club leader who has the tact to smooth away the obstacles of a slightly known language the returns in interest and appreciation are large and immediate. Students who cannot be trusted with the spelling of English monosyllables and whose composition is unintelligible except to a kindly intuition, have read Emerson and Shakespeare, under guidance, with keen interest. One such said on one occasion, 'That is grand, but if I'd try to read it at home I couldn't make out at all.' In the familiar phrase the Russian Jew needs only 'half a chance.' That given he will do the rest. He does need greatly wider economic opportunities and the intercourse with the more privileged which will form, unconsciously to himself, a

finer type of social standards than his Russian past has developed."

Among the Russian Jewish people themselves the Hebrew Literature Society has developed. It has a house of its own at 310 Catharine Street. At its meetings discussions on religious, scientific, political, and social subjects are held. The lectures, usually on Sunday afternoons, are given by well qualified men from the universities and colleges, and the large audience which is attracted is thus afforded well digested information. There are also on other occasions addresses and discussions in Yiddish on Friday evenings. In addition to participation in debate, members may avail themselves of the library, which contains volumes in English, Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian and German. In the discussions the language employed is sometimes English, sometimes Yiddish. The society promotes the social life by entertainments and dances. A gymnasium is contemplated and with it there is likely to be developed physical training, both for the older and the younger generation.

The Educational Alliance, located at 516 Spruce Street, is so called because it is the result of an amalgamation of the Educational League and the Hebrew Students' League. Its chief work, which was organized by the former in 1903, is free instruction to the immigrant in English, elementary and advanced arithmetic, algebra, history, and literature. The instruction is given four evenings each week, and the enrollment is over 200, with a nightly attendance of about 100. This season (1904-05) a paid superintendent has been engaged. The main result of the direct co-operation of the Students' League has been the availability of its members as teachers, the Students' League having given up its own class work. It, however, retains its identity for social purposes and for the founding of a scholarship at the University of Pennsylvania. Its members are college students and graduates and higher school men.

The Young Men's Hebrew Union is the outgrowth of a number of small literary societies. It is the most representative of the young people's societies whose members are imbued with American social and educational ideas. The character of its work can best be judged by reference to its debates, mock trials, lectures, amateur dramatic performances, entertainments, receptions and dances. Its Women's Auxiliary, which holds separate meetings, helps

in the social work of the organization. Its rooms are at 229 Pine Street.

Literary societies come and go among the younger people. The names change, but many of the members are the same in a list of societies that may be made up at any time. These organizations are a valuable feature in the self-educational efforts of the young people, and though they tend at times too much to mere dialectics, this is by no means a serious result compared with the good accomplished.

We have, then, some large societies, besides a number of smaller ones, promoting the intellectual life among the Russian Jewish people themselves, as distinguished from the public schools, the settlements, and the educational societies organized more or less from without.

It would be valuable to have one of the branches of the public library in this district. There may not be a neighborhood spirit that understands how to call for it, but there is no question in my mind that once established the library would be most largely patronized.

In connection with the subject under discussion it should be noted that a number of young people take advantage of the low tuition fees of the Drexel Institute and Temple College and are thus materially helped in their efforts to improve their education.

No reference has been made here to the religious education of the young people because that has been amply treated in the chapter on the subject of religion.

This review of the educational influences surrounding the Russian Jews of Philadelphia should be convincing evidence of the intellectual desire of the community and the intellectual stimulus which it is receiving — a desire and a stimulus which make for high class citizenship.



## (C) CHICAGO

Endeavoring to deal more directly with the educational work actually done for the Russian Jewish people by the public schools, the various settlements and private institutions, in and about the Ghetto, we shall, at the same time try to make some analysis of this work as affected by American Jewish conditions.

There are eight public schools which minister chiefly to the educational wants of the Jewish young people. Five of these are situated in the very heart of the Jewish district, with a proportion of Jewish children as high as 93 per cent. The other three fairly mark the northern, western and southern limits of the West Side, and have a proportion as low as 20 per cent. The names of these schools, together with the total number of pupils and proportion of Jews are, according to statements received from the principals, as follows:

SCHOOL	TOTAL	JEWISH PUPILS	PER CENT.
Washburne .....	1575	1465	93
Garfield .....	1525	1400	92
Smythe .....	1225	1078	88
Foster .....	2075	1640	80
Goodrich .....	1200	786	65
Medill (elementary)...	837	335	40
Dore .....	1093	328	30
Polk .....	1250	250	20
Jewish Training School	650	647	99½
<hr/>		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total .....	11430	7929	68.9

Thus we find that in a total of 11,430 pupils, 7,929, or 68.9 per cent., are Jewish.

It must be remembered that it is not the fortune of every one of these eight thousand children to go uninterruptedly through all eight grades provided for by the public schools. Prof. Bamberger, of the Jewish Training School, in the

Tenth Annual Report, asserts that the statistics in the school reports of the city of Chicago show that not over three per cent. of all pupils of the public schools are graduated, *i. e.*, pass through all eight grades. And when one comes to examine any group of schools he will find considerable confirmation of this statement.

Of the eight schools mentioned, three, Foster, Polk, and Washburne, have no seventh and eighth grades at all. That there is a falling off even in the fifth and sixth grades is proved by the small number of pupils in the seventh and eighth grades in those schools where such grades are maintained. The following are figures for Goodrich, Smythe, and Garfield, as compiled by Miss Witkowsky, who investigated the subject:<sup>1</sup>

SCHOOL	TOTAL NO.	SEVENTH GRADE	EIGHTH GRADE
Goodrich .....	1165	110	48
Smythe .....	1183	113	73
Garfield .....	1328	145	65
Total .....	3676	368	186

This table shows clearly that out of a total of 3,676, 368, or ten per cent., reach the seventh grade and only 186, or about five per cent., reach the eighth grade.

What tends to aggravate these conditions, and further to interfere with the educational career of the Jewish child is, on the one hand, the apparently natural truancy of some boys, and on the other, the necessity — always pressing on the workingmen's children — of leaving school and going to work. This they do very soon after they reach the age of fourteen, thirteen, or even twelve. As many of them begin school at a late age, probably because they have come to this country within but a few years, one can judge what inadequate education these future workingmen take with them. Some of the principals feel this keenly, deploring the early removal from school, especially when it affects a boy who has already attained high scholarship.

These are some of the undesirable features connected with the present status of education on the West Side. However, the outlook is exceedingly bright. When we

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Seventh Ward District Bureau of Charities, 1897-1899, Chicago.

remember that there are already eight large, fine school buildings, warm and comfortable, equipped with books and stationery, libraries and gymnasiums, ornamented with appropriate pictures; when we remember that these are controlled by large faculties of teachers and earnest principals, many of whom have as their deepest interest the education and development of our children, studying and counteracting their drawbacks in English, and in physical health, in which many of them are so deplorably deficient, then gloomy thoughts vanish. When we remember that the ability and scholarship of this army of eight thousand children, fostered and encouraged in these schools, might have remained dormant, neglected or even stifled in the land they came from; when we think that the interest and anxiety of the parents to see their children educated,—which is certainly satisfied here to a large degree;—we can readily realize the worth and success of the effort made to educate our Jewish young people on the West Side.

Of the other schools in the city, with Jewish pupils, especially of those on the Northwest Side, little or nothing can be said. There the problem of dealing with the Jewish children as such does not at all arise, so completely have they become an integral part of the neighborhood they live in. That this is actually the case is clearly corroborated by the reports of the principals of six Northwest Side schools. The principal of the Wells School, speaking of the scholarship of the Jewish children, says: "Have noticed no difference; in fact, could not pick out the Jewish children from the others in appearance or scholarship." The principal of the Burr School says: "Parents interested in schools and what is done for the children, but no more so than non-Jewish parents." This simply shows the process of Americanization that is going on, and an investigation of the schools in other parts of the city would probably further emphasize the same fact.

Side by side with the public school, and doing an educational work which in essence is even more valuable to the Jewish children than the regular school instruction, is the Jewish Training School. This school was founded in 1888, in recognition of two great principles: First, that trading is too much a part of Jewish life; that it is becoming detrimental to its welfare in the present industrial age; that, therefore, trades must supplement trading. Secondly, that the three R's are too much a part of school life and

the three H's — the perfect union of heart, head and hand — not enough. As a result of these two basic principles, there stands to-day on Judd Street, between Jefferson and Clinton, a fine brick building, erected by the private effort of wealthy Jews of Chicago. The grades of instruction include a kindergarten, primary department, and grammar department. The manual work is carried on in two divisions, the art and the mechanical. The art division comprises modeling and free hand drawing, taught in all the classes, and designing, taught in the grammar classes only. The mechanical division comprises Sloyd, cardboard work, wood work, machine work, sewing, cutting, fitting, and draughting, and domestic economy. Particular emphasis is laid on physical development, gymnastics being taught in all the classes. Music, too, is taught in the several grades. It is testified by many who have studied its progress and results, that, from the pedagogic standpoint, the school is successful.

Still another factor subsidiary to the public school and influential in the educational and social development of our Russian Jewish children is the settlement kindergarten. The one at Hull House takes the lead. It contains 50 children, of whom a little over half are Jewish.

The kindergarten in the Jewish settlement on Maxwell Street near Halsted has also done its share of good work for the Jewish child. The number of pupils is limited to 25.

A settlement of comparatively recent origin, the Henry Booth House, is doing almost exclusively kindergarten work, and that mainly among our Jewish children. It is situated at 125 West Fourteenth Place and is under the direction of the Ethical Culture Society.

The institutions so far described are undoubtedly working for the highest good that is in the child. There is one other institution which must be dealt with in connection with the educational work done for children. This is the Talmud Torah, or Hebrew Free School. It occupies a large brick building only a dozen houses away from the Jewish Training School, on Judd Street near Clinton. The outside of this building is really attractive and in great contrast with the dilapidated shanties around it. This structure, together with an older one in the rear, is valued at \$4,000. The seating capacity is barely 500. About 600 pupils attend the school, 200 aged from 4 to 6 years, during public



school hours, and the other older children, from 6 to 13 years of age, from 4 to 7.30 P. M. They are taught the Hebrew alphabet, reading, grammar, translation into Yiddish of the Pentateuch, prophets and Hagiographa. Twelve teachers are employed. The annual income is about \$15,000, contributed as follows: (1) Five cents weekly dues from all members; (2) ten to fifteen cents weekly for tuition unless parents are unable to pay; (3) contributions from congregations; (4) donations on various occasions, such as weddings, bar mitzvahs, b'rith milahs (ceremonies of circumcision), and the like.

Subsidiary to the Talmud Torah, are the chedarim, or private Hebrew classes, which are to be found on almost every block of the Ghetto. The hours and subjects are about the same as at the Talmud Torah; in some instances more modern methods are employed, in others more mediæval or ancient, according to the progressiveness or backwardness of the individual teacher. The classes are invariably conducted in the houses of the "rabbis" and usually number from 20 to 40 pupils. The children attend until they become bar mitzvah (thirteen years of age, the age according to the orthodox custom for admission of the child into the faith).

Instruction is also given privately to younger children. A host of "rabbis" go the rounds early in the morning in order to help children "zu sogen broche" (offer morning prayer).

So much concerning elementary education. Turning now to secondary and higher education, we shall find the facts far more telling. All in all, there are perhaps 1,000 Jewish boys and girls in the different secondary and high schools of the city, public and private.

The two high schools of the West Side district are the Medill and the English High and Manual Training School. The total number of Jewish pupils in the Medill is about 200, or one third. The number in the other is about 100, or about 10 per cent. This difference may be partly due to the location of these schools, the Medill being easily accessible, while the Manual Training is far removed from the district. The fact that the former is of the regular type of American schools, offering an education which is essentially intellectual and literary, while the latter offers an education that involves manual training, may have something to do with the difference.

Aside from these two public high schools, there is also a private institution, for secondary or academic education, which is growing in popularity among the young men on the West Side. This is the Lewis Institute of Science, Literature and Technology. There are about 60 Jewish pupils in this institute, most of them paying \$60 a year for tuition. The intellectual work of some is particularly notable. Professor Carman thinks that the Jewish pupils represent the extremes, "the best and the poorest." The selected courses of study are mainly literary, scientific and sociological, but not technological. On the other hand, the Armour, a thorough-going institute of technology, is rather avoided by our Russian Jewish boys. Here again the question of location might come in, but certainly cannot be the only one. As against those in the constructive sciences there are scores of young men in the medical and legal sciences.

There are about 30 Russian Jews in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and 30 in the Rush Medical College. In the less prominent medical schools, like the Bennett or the Harvey (a college having night sessions), many more are to be found. In the John Marshall Law School there are 10 Russian Jewish young men; while others are scattered among the different law schools of the city. The fact that the number of Russian Jewish young men in these schools exceeds that in the two institutions of technology furnishes further material for future analysis.

More indicative of educational progress is the fact that many of our Jewish boys on the West Side are realizing that there is a University of Chicago in this city, and that it is not open to the boys on Michigan Avenue exclusively. Those in the department of literature predominate. It is not for me to speak of their success in the different branches. Several are here on scholarships, and they proceed with their studies from one year to another in spite of many financial difficulties.

It is difficult to tell how many West Side boys would gladly take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the University if these difficulties were overcome. There is many a young man, sitting in a cold, lamp-lit bedroom on the West Side over a book on physics, studying perhaps the First Three Laws of Newton, which he would like to re-establish by actual experiment in the laboratory, but is denied this privilege because he happens to

be a poor workingman. How many young men whose educational careers have been cut short in Russia, whose identity in America is lost amid the numberless bundles of shirts or knee-pants in the factories of Chicago,— how many of these would joyfully occupy some of the vacant seats in the lecture halls in the university if the tuition fees, and the high living expense, were not so difficult to meet. Nevertheless, while the money question is serious with the majority, for the few opportunities are open in the University, as well as in the Lewis Institute. The road may not be so easy, but with a little self-sacrifice, combined with the sympathy and help of others, it is possible for these to win a college or university education.

Hull House can point to more than one young man and woman who have from year to year bettered their English, increased their knowledge of men and things, and improved their taste, receiving all in a natural, free and truly glad-to-give manner. Nor are they slow in taking advantage here. In general two-thirds of the membership of Hull House clubs and classes are Jewish young people. They predominate most in the classes in English, literature and social studies, and least in manual training, drawing and art studies. In fact, the English classes are at times composed entirely of Jews. The art classes are entirely non-Jewish in membership. Supplementing the work of these classes are the clubs, many of which are Jewish in membership. Their interest is chiefly in debating, in the reading and discussion of literature, in dramatics and musical and social entertainments.

Very similar to these, though not quite so extensive, are the various clubs and classes at the Jewish settlement. The personal attention, help and guidance which these are receiving may be judged from the fact that there are forty workers connected with the settlement, ten of whom are college-bred men and women. The subjects of special educational value which are offered at the present time are: drawing, debating, handwork, weaving, clay-modeling, violin, reading, and piano playing.

As has been mentioned, the Booth House lays chief emphasis on the kindergarten, which is much needed in the Henry Street neighborhood. There are, however, two distinctly educational clubs besides those of a social or merry-making nature. The chief interest about these two clubs is that they are composed of working boys and girls and



are conducted by self-educated young men who have been, and in all probability will continue to be, workingmen themselves, who come directly out of the ranks of rising "Young Russia."

Independent of the settlement or any other institution, yet widely influential in their respective spheres, are three Jewish educational societies, known as the Self Educational Club, the Lassalle Political and Educational Club, and the Hebrew Literary Association. It is here in the humble educational work of these clubs of coat operators, cloak operators and cigar makers that one gets the first glimpse of that "ever-glorious revolt of toiling humanity" against unrelieved sameness, and daily weary monotone of present-day factory life, "against being shut up in one single chapter of life," as Miss Addams says. Yet I am afraid that the people who "go slumming" seldom discover these more essential elements and nobler manifestations of the Chicago Ghetto. How many know of the existence and the great needs of the Club House (of the Self Educational Club), the Labor Lyceum (of the Lassalle Club) and the Reading Room (of the Hebrew Literary Association) on the West Side?

Standing on the very edge of the educational map and perhaps as far remote from each other socially as are the north and south poles, are the numerous lodges, the chevras, classes for the study of the Talmud, and congregations on the one hand; and the trade unions, the political and socialistic clubs on the other. What these institutions do educationally and socially for the uplifting of the masses can be seen, felt, and perhaps described, but not satisfactorily dealt with; nor is it possible to show by means of figures the educational influence of a similar type of social forces located, figuratively speaking, just mid-way between the synagogue and the socialist headquarters, namely, the Jewish stage, the press, and the professions of medicine, law, and the like. It would unquestionably prove exceedingly interesting to examine the effect, for example, of the more thoroughly educated doctor on the particular neighborhood he lives in on the health and culture of the families he comes in contact with. But such a discussion is out of my domain.

However inadequate the treatment may have been, the facts already presented are sufficient to indicate that there is in the limited district of the Chicago Ghetto a host of



educational forces, emanating from widely different quarters, but blending to shape and mold anew the Jewish type of mind to suit the new standards and conditions and to produce those rapid changes which have aroused so much interest in recent studies of the East Side of New York and the Whitechapel of London.

As a result of this education there is rising out of the ranks of the public schools a class of young men and women whose like is almost new to Jewish life. The note of meriment in the young American Israelite, foreign as it is to him, from the historic point of view, is certainly full of promise. There is no longer in him — especially in the better educated young man — that extreme asceticism and sour-facedness which mark his Hebrew educated prototype, the yeshibah bochur (student of the Talmud). Tending to overshadow these typical characteristics there appear gradually on the face of the modern young man, “lines and angles of smiles,” indicative of a more agreeable, if not so typical, a nature as that of the yeshibah bochur of Russia. The education of the school and the culture of the settlement tend to make the Jewish young man more of a social being; more varied in his likes and dislikes; more easily sharing the faults and virtues of German, American, and Irish young men.

In the frequent large social or public gatherings on Friday evening in Turner Hall, for example, where boys and girls dance away until four o’clock next morning, there is obviously just as much to be commended as there is to be condemned. The fact that the Jewish young people are outgrowing their self-centred natures and are learning to meet different people on a social plane is certainly of great significance. On the other hand, when this social tendency is carried too far, when the hour is unusually lengthened, the sobriety of the young men and the modesty of the young women must inevitably suffer.

What proportion of these dancing clubs and parties consists of public and high-school graduates is difficult to tell. It is enough to say that they take a large share of interest in organizing and maintaining these operative, dramatic and pleasure clubs, as they are so frequently called. It remains to be seen how soon they will organize a social settlement, a municipal voting league, an ethical culture society.



HARVEST TIME

*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, Lyman County, S. D.*



JEWISH WOMEN AT A PICNIC

*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, Lyman County, S. D.*



VICTORIOUS FOOTBALL TEAM  
*Woodbine Industrial School—Jewish*



VII

AMUSEMENTS AND SOCIAL  
LIFE

## AMUSEMENTS AND SOCIAL LIFE

### (A) NEW YORK

Although it may be accounted a negligible factor, yet the liquor saloon has some value in a study of the social life and amusements of the Russian Jew in New York City (and doubtless in the other large Jewish centres in the United States). Its relation to the topic is inverse; in other words as the Jewish population of a given district increases the number of "gin mills" decreases. Contrary to the advent of butcher-shops, grocery stores, and "coffee and cake parlors," the disappearance of a saloon from a street corner where it had seemed moored for all time to come, and where it had been located for a period beyond memory, has always, on the East Side, and latterly in the newer Ghettos of New York City, signaled the ousting from that district of its former denizens and their supplanting by a population between which and the saloon there is no affinity. Not that there are no liquor saloons in the Ghettos. The Russian Jew is not a teetotaler, but he has no need for the solicitous guardianship of a temperance organization. He drinks when he feels so inclined, or when it seems to him the occasion warrants. But there must always be some reason for his drinking; there is the "gefillte" fish on Sabbath eve and for Sabbath lunch. It is almost a desecration of the joy of the Sabbath not to have a little brandy before the fish-course, once with the course, and once after. Then there are the festal occasions, the "Rejoicing of the Law," the anniversary of the hanging of Haman, the celebration of the Maccabean victories and the miracle of the lights — surely, these are sufficient warrant for looking upon the wine when it is red, or tasting of strong drink. Then, too, the great family events: the b'rith milah (circumcision), the pidyon ha ben (a ceremony relating to the first-born), the bar mitzvah (thirteenth anniversary of a male child), the tnoyim (engagement), the wedding — surely one cannot invite friends to these great

functions without previously having a small keg of beer brought in; people cannot sit at a dry table!

But the drinking that is done on any of these occasions is done in the house. The Russian Jew does not lean on the bar; nor does he sit around in the saloon. If he likes a glass of beer with his meals, he can have a bottled supply on hand.

What saloons there are on the East Side do but an impoverished business and are dependent to a large extent upon the chance passer-by or upon the steadily waning "kettle" trade. The brilliantly illuminated, lavishly decorated, expensively equipped saloons that may be seen in other sections of the city are unknown on the East Side. What brilliant illumination there is on the East Side, what lavish decoration, what rich furnishing, is in the restaurants, the latest response to the steadily growing social instinct and material development of the East Side.

Instead of the saloon the "coffee and cake parlor," and from the "coffee and cake parlor," by a process of steady and marked evolution, the restaurant, with its nouveau art decorations, mission furniture, table d'hôte, and string orchestra! Ten years ago it would have been impossible for even one of these restaurants, the acme of social life on the East Side, to have paid even running expenses; to-day there are a half-dozen taxed to their utmost capacity daily and nightly, and more are preparing to make a bid for the profitable approval of the East Side with brighter illuminations, gaudier trimmings, more æsthetic furnishings than those which now ride on the golden crest of popularity. Five years ago the proposed establishment of a "high class" restaurant on semi-philanthropic lines was hailed with the joy of anticipated gastronomic delight by the apparently limited number of young Russians and sons of Russians who yearned for "better things." Now, the semi-philanthropic venture is not so popular, and its patronage is not so typical of the elements that go to make up the East Side as some of those established by the people themselves.

But though these high class restaurants have fitted themselves into the daily life of the East Side, they have not done so at the expense of the humbler resorts of which they are the offspring. After all, it is in the "coffee saloon" — where many times more tea is consumed than the beverage from which it takes its name — that the East Side

finds recreation. Whether it is to play chess or checkers, or to discuss Karl Marx or Bakounine, or to analyze Tolstoi or Ibsen, or to debate the relative merits and demerits of the naturalistic or romantic drama — or the wonderful colorature of the last night's prima donna at the Metropolitan — (for all of these are included in the light converse of the East Side), or to denounce the critics of Adler, the actor, or to excoriate the traducers of Gordin, the playwright — these topics are handled best, thoughts come lucidly and words eloquently, over the glass of tea *a la Russe* — with a floating slice of lemon, and the cigarette.

It is estimated that there are between 250 and 300 of these coffee and cake establishments on the lower East Side, which figure is the best proof of the popularity of these "workingmen's clubs." Unlike the occasional liquor saloon on the East Side, they are absolutely independent of transient trade. The chance passer-by does not enter into the calculations of the proprietor, and is stared at as an intruder by the regular habitués. We have called these places "workingmen's clubs." They answer that description more truly and more pleasantly than the Bishop's tavern, for here there is an absolute guarantee of sobriety, and a free, democratic foregathering of kindred spirits. If one is up in the coffee and cake geography of the district, he knows where he may find the social and intellectual diversion most to his liking. It is each to his own; the Socialist has his chosen headquarters, the chess-crank his, the music-lover his, and so on right down the line. Some, indeed, combine two or three cults or fads, but even these have a *tendenz* which stands out clearly after the first clash of impressions.

Two or three of these "clubs" have considerable life in the afternoon, especially those in which the radical *literati* and journalists, the compositors on the Yiddish dailies, and students and insurance agents and others who have a few hours of the day to kill congregate. But, for the most of them there is no life until late in the evening. It is generally ten o'clock before the social phase manifests itself; if the "popular price" performance at the Metropolitan Opera House is a worthy one, or if there is something worth while on the boards in the Yiddish theatre, it may even be later before the roll-call would have a full response in certain of these places. The resort of the chess-player is naturally quiet enough, but the philosophers and



critics are oracular and demonstrative. Often it is "mine host" who leads the discussion, or sits in judgment of the pros and cons. When he says his say, it is boldly, recklessly almost, viewed from the mercenary aspect of retaining his patronage. Nor does he fail to castigate a stubborn adherent of a contrary view. But the heat of controversy never assumes a petty, sulking character; to tear "mine host's" arguments to tatters, to utterly rout him at every point, is no mean accomplishment and worth hazarding many defeats, for generally he is very well informed on the topic under discussion. In fact, it is his known views and predilections that decide the character of his patronage. Thus, if his establishment is frequented by Socialists, it is fair to assume that he belongs to that political school; if his clientele is made up largely of musicians, he is an amateur critic or patron of the liberal art.

And where the cigarette smoke is thickest and denunciation of the present forms of government loudest, there you find women! One wishes he could write these women down gently. But to none would gentle words sound more strange than to the women of the radical coffee "parlor," who listen to strongest language, and loudest voices, nor fail to make themselves heard in the heat of the discussion. Yet it is hard to criticise them. The hall-bedroom is such a dingy, dreary place; the walls so close they seem to crush the unfortunate whose "home" is within its oppressive limits. The "coffee saloon" is light and cheerful; the noise is only the swelling chorus of spirits with whom they are in harmonious accord. If they are not the objects of fine courtesies and considerateness, they do not miss them; perhaps they never knew them. The stern realities of life, the terrible disappointment of thwarted ambition, the bruising friction of tradition and "emancipation," the struggle for existence,—all these have conspired to rob them of the finer attributes of womanhood. These are the stalwarts of the radical movements, the Amazons, or, as they have been dubbed, "die kaempferinen," whose zealotry rallies the flagging courage of their "genossen." Unromantic, perhaps, and yet we hear of them toiling, slaving, denying themselves until some man has won a degree and an entry into one of the professions. But, as they sit there in an atmosphere of tea-steam and cigarette smoke, one who does not know sees them only as unwomanly women; pallid, tired, thin-lipped, flat-chested and angular, wearing men's

hats and shoes, without a hint of color or finery. And to them, as to the men, the time of night means nothing until way into the small hours. When one must sleep in a hall-bedroom there is no hurry about bedtime.

Even when these radical resorts have reluctantly surrendered their habitués, night life in the Ghetto is not at an end. There are still some resorts that are aglow with light and strident with color. The actor-folk and their admirers and satellites are still awake, talking "shop," posing, sneering, joking, romancing, fawning, and flattering, until the gray light of dawn paling the glowing incandescent admonishes them that sunrise, and therefore bedtime, is near at hand. The great "star" or the distinguished playwright about whose table, as at an altar, sat the worshipful, gives the signal; the lesser lights, down to the chorister, know the meaning of that prodigious yawn — and night life in the Ghetto is at an end,— that is, the night life that is not lived behind the tight-drawn shades, to the melody of clicking ivory chips. But of this life this is not the place to speak.

Theatre-going is so much a habit with the Russian Jew in New York City that at the moment of this writing three theatres are deriving large profits from catering to it. All of these theatres, with seating capacities equal to the largest patronized by the non-Jewish elements of the city's population (one built for the specific purpose of housing a Yiddish stock company) are located within five minutes' walk of each other in the down-town Ghetto. Another, in the newer, but rapidly growing and more prosperous Harlem Ghetto, has failed. There were five Yiddish theatres up to a very recent date, and there may be that number again shortly. It is estimated that the patrons of the Yiddish theatres number from five thousand to seven thousand a night, and as performances are given on each of the seven nights in the week, with two matinees (Saturday and Sunday) the importance of the theatre as a source of amusement in the Ghetto may be realized.

And because it has such an important place in the life of the Ghetto, it is all the more deplorable that the Yiddish stage is not a better institution than it has been permitted to become. What good may be said of the Yiddish theatre is not owing to those whose first duty it should be to make it possible to speak well of it; rather, it is due to the people

themselves, who have compelled the theatre-folk to show some little deference to popular taste.

The players, with but few exceptions, are not educated and anything but artistic. Their mimetic powers are highly developed, undoubtedly, but most of them lack creative power. Naturally, they are at their best in photographic reproductions or in caricaturing types and characters with which their lives and environments have familiarized them. There is no desire here to deny to any of the leading men and women of the Yiddish stage the credit that rightfully belongs to them. Indeed, it is perhaps the greatest tribute that can be paid to them when it is said that if they possessed that education which is a requisite for even a moderate success on the American stage, they would by now have been the greatest actors in the world, so wonderful are their talents within their mental limitations.

Still another factor that tends to prevent the stage from rising is the discouragement of authorship. The Yiddish playwrights are few, because some of them, in combination with business managers and players, have conspired to limit the number. About eighteen years ago a Yiddish company was eking out a precarious existence by giving performances of the Goldfaden operettas in a converted "concert-hall" which had been renamed the "Oriental Theatre." Possessing more business than literary ability, one "Professor" Hurwitz gathered about himself a number of Yiddish players who had drifted here from Europe, among them Moguesco (perhaps the greatest of all Yiddish actors), Kessler, Feinman, and others. He started a rival theatre of which he became the manager and author. Except the Goldfaden plays, which were used as "stop-gaps," none but the emanations of his pen, in the main clumsy imitations of the wholesome creations of the "father of the Yiddish stage," were permitted to be heard in the playhouse of which he contrived to gain control. How many "plays" he wrote no one can say; not even Hurwitz himself. Besides "historic" dramas and operas, he wrote "zeit-piesen" — "news melodramas" they might be called. Hardly a sensation of the day, such as the Blood Accusation of Tisza Eszlar (a full performance of which required eight acts rendered in two evenings), the Dreyfus Case, the financial panic of 1892, the volcanic eruption on the Island of Martinique, went undramatized by his astoundingly prolific pen. Twenty-four hours was sufficient



time for him to conceive, write and stage a play. The authors of the sensational American melodrama are rank amateurs by contrast with him.

Another prolific playwright is Joseph Lateiner. Lately, however, his pen products have been few and far between, and for the most part unsuccessful. His plays, like those of the Goldfaden type, have musical settings. They differ from the Hurwitz productions in that they have sustained, coherent plots, which though as artificial as most stage productions, are yet not without a basis of verisimilitude and logical sequence of events and climax.

It is worth while mentioning here that Sigmund Moguelesco is responsible for most, and also for the best music of the Yiddish stage (except that written by Goldfaden). Much of it is original, some of it borrowed either from the compositions of the great chazanim (cantors) of Russia, or "adapted" from the more popular Italian operas. But even these adaptations have been so altered in rhythm and tempo as to become almost characteristically "Yiddish."

To-day Jacob Gordin is the dominant figure of the Yiddish stage, and his impress is the strongest. Some others, among them Libin and Kobrin, have managed to get a hearing, and not without success, but they are disciples of Gordin, and at times have ventured farther than their master. Gordin has excellent literary skill and powers and, if he were tolerant of criticism and amenable to discipline, could become the greatest factor in the development of the Yiddish stage. But it would be absurd to grant him all that he and his followers claim for him. Although he has written many plays which he probably regards as greater, his "Yiddish King Lear" must stand out indicative of his great possibilities if he had not chosen to become a philosopher and a problem play writer. What gives Gordin his greatest vogue, and what tends to confuse many of his zealotic followers, is his ability to write strong scenes. When at his best he has produced living, breathing entities, in contrast to the artificial, impossible creatures produced by his predecessors. His main faults are his stubbornly mistaken conception of "realism" and his persistent exposures of phases of life which are better left unrevealed. The concensus of opinion is that "God, Man and Devil" is Gordin's master-work. It is a combination of Job and Faust and its lesson is that even the most saint-like man may be tempted and fall. It has been witnessed



and approved by college professors, and is unquestionably a lasting contribution to the literature of the drama.

Besides the playwrights already discussed, must be mentioned Shaikewitch (Schomer), a half-dozen of whose plays have won popular esteem; Seiffert, with a few good plays and several adaptations to his credit; Sharkansky, whose specialty is the dramatization of the High Festival liturgy (the names of two of his plays, "Unsane Tokef" and "Kol Nidre," will serve as illustrations); and Sigmund Feinman, an actor with a fair education, who has been particularly fortunate in adaptations. Other of the Yiddish actors, Kessler and Tomashefsky, have permitted their names to appear on the posters as co-authors, but their pretensions have been met with knowing smiles — there are some "hack" writers who want money, not fame.

Jacob P. Adler, the nestor of the Yiddish stage, has been so much written of that it would be idle to say anything at length about him here. But very little has been written about David Kessler, who is the equal of Adler, and in a few roles his superior.

Of the women of the Yiddish stage, it needs only be said that Bertha Kalisch is an actress of such rare ability that even so discriminating a critic as "Alan Dale" has said of her that she is as good as Sarah Bernhardt at Sarah's best, but never as bad as Sarah at Sarah's worst. The others, with the possible exception of Mme. Dina Feinman and Mrs. Sarah Adler, count for very little indeed.

Unwittingly, the people themselves have been factors in lowering the tone of the Yiddish stage by fostering the pernicious system of "benefits." At one time or another, lodges and societies of the East Side, of which there are a countless number, will "buy a benefit"; that is, they will pay the management a certain sum of money, a little over half of the box-office receipts in the event of every seat being occupied; for this sum the benefit buyers are given tickets representing the extreme seating capacity and standing room of the theatre. A play is selected by the committee representing the organization to be presented on the night of the benefit. The tickets are sold by the members of the society and every dollar received over the price paid to the management is the society's profit. This is no philanthropy on the part of the theatre managers; on the contrary, it is good business. The theatres may be reasonably certain of "crowded houses" on Friday, Saturday

and Sunday evenings and at the matinees on Saturday and Sunday afternoon, but the other nights of the week are not very lucrative. Without these "benefits" the theatres would have to run the risk of financial straits. It may readily be seen how these "benefits" could become a powerful weapon in the hands of the people, if properly directed.

It is on the "benefit" nights that the Yiddish theatre is best worth visiting, provided the play is not the thing. The audience is made up of family parties and neighbor-groups; from the grandsire to the infant and the boarder the whole tenement house is there with its luncheons and its bedlam. Half of the audience has never been to the theatre before, and would not have been there now, only they could not "insult" by not buying tickets, or because it is a "mitzvah" (good deed) to contribute to the good cause for which this "benefit" is given. And having earned the "mitzvah" why not partake of the earthly joy in its train? Here and there is the "veteran" theatre-goer, who may be a member of the society, or also could not "insult" by refusing to buy a ticket, or also wanted the "mitzvah" and all that goes with it. The veteran may be easily discovered, the centre of a group of novitiates explaining the play, naming the actors, criticising them audibly if they are lesser lights, telling where the laugh will come in and repeating lines lost in the noise. Altogether they are joyous occasions, these benefits. Presents are passed over the footlights to the "stars," the officers of the society strut out before the curtain between acts and make "spitches," the member who sold the greatest number of tickets has a gold-medal pinned on his palpitating bosom, and all bathe in a sea of ecstasy, with a feeling of good deeds well done, philanthropic purposes well served — if the "benefit" is a success.

Although the Yiddish drama is decadent, there is no evidence of a similar degeneracy among the people. As already pointed out, the value of plays like those written by Gordin and his disciples is due entirely to "strong" scenes and powerful acting. Take these two attractions away, and the plays must fail, as many of them have. The social tendency of the people is constantly upward. Every sign-post in this period of transition points higher and higher. Their conceptions of life, of morals and ethics are expanding. Those who have worked among them for a con-

siderable number of years see these signs clearly. It must be borne in mind that the population of the so-called Ghetto is increasing rapidly, and it is but natural that under the circumstances there should be added to it such individuals who are below the average of decency, or are forced down in the social scale by inability to cope with conditions. Hundreds of influences are at work in the Ghetto which make for higher ideas and chief among these is the natural inclination, or rather aspiration, of the Jew to live the higher, better life, in accordance with that ethical code which has been his guide through the centuries.

The ladies of the Ghetto are never "at home," but the welcome visitor is always sure of his glass of tea, his dish of preserves, and some fruit. There are no "Kaffee Klatches" here; nor progressive euchres, or bridge-whists. Hospitality is simple, homely, genuine. There are no social circles, "social life" as that term is understood does not exist. "Parties" are given; not "coming out" parties, but "engagement parties," "graduation parties," "bar-mitzvah parties." The wedding, of course, is the big function. Hundreds of societies give dances and "receptions" (the latter being a more pretentious name for the former) during the winter, to which anyone may come if he can pay the price of a ticket and "hat check." Some societies couple entertainments with these receptions. The great social events are the "entertainment and ball" of the Beth Israel Hospital, the Hebrew Sheltering House and Home for the Aged, the Daughters of Jacob, the Young Men's Benevolent League, and the New Era Club. It is at these functions that the East Side makes its most gorgeous sartorial display, and it is by no means either a crude or cheap display. The women for the most part are as exquisitely clad as their sisters who visit the Horse-Show, and the diamonds worn at these affairs can be outblinked only by the collection on the grand tier at the Metropolitan Opera House. Strange as it may sound to many, the East Side is not all poverty and suffering.

The Harlem contingent has acquired some "society" manners, but like newly acquired things, these manners do not fit very snugly, and their wearing is very amusing. Perhaps, with much effort some of the social aspirants will become accustomed to the new burden. The "climbing" is confined, for the most part, to the wives of physicians and lawyers and manufacturers. The great mass regards it all

with quiet derision, and will have nothing to do with "visiting lists" and the rest of what they call "blowing from themselves." With the mass, relatives and friends are to be visited when time allows, or when occasion demands.

Owing to home-conditions on the East Side there is only such social life for the young folks as is made possible by organization membership, and as may express itself in the dances mentioned above, or in "open-meetings," indulged in by the "literary" societies, the Zionist societies, and the clubs in the settlements. In the summer time there are the picnics, which are dances in an open pavilion, with a few patches of grass surrounding it, all enclosed with a high fence. Much has been said against these "picnics" and it must be admitted that many of them are not very desirable. There is great need for healthy, wholesome recreation, for expression of the buoyancy of youth; and it is greatly to be regretted that the facilities for the things that help to make boys and girls better, purer men and women are so very few.



## (B) PHILADELPHIA<sup>1</sup>

Sharply contrasted with the middle aged, transplanted Russian Jews who accept even their pleasures sadly are the young immigrants, pioneers rather than refugees, and the native born, who seize eagerly on every social outlet offered by a niggardly environment. Unworn enthusiasms hurry them to tawdry American amusements while their fathers stand steadfastly by their old world observances. For of all the incoming peoples of European birth, the Russian Jew, after half a lifetime under religious and political ban, adjusts himself least easily to American forms. Fleeing from his dread birthplace, where home and synagogue trembled in every political breeze, to a strange unstudied land, his attention is held by the one great and splendid fact that home and synagogue are here secure as long as he and his can bear their share of the burden of the day. The logical centre of his pleasures as well as his pains is, then, chevra (synagogue) and home. Not infrequently a social evening is opened for him and his old wiggled wife by the wedding of the child of a Ghetto neighbor who was also his neighbor in a little Lithuanian village before a ukase depopulated it. And the funerals of friends, who through a long life endured many things in both the old world and the new, take him with increasing frequency from his books and business.

There are, also, annual charity balls to which his ever ready generosity calls him and leaves him stranded, a quaint anachronism, an oriental patriarch awkwardly avoiding the rush of prize waltzes and Smoky Moke two-steps. Finally, he is a member of charitable lodges and beneficial associations, which hold semi-social dialectic business meetings.

But of amusement pure and simple, of seeking pleasure and jollity for their own sweet sake, without the base of a ramifying religious impulse, the Russian Jew of the pass-

<sup>1</sup> The data for this paper were gathered chiefly in 1900 when the writer was a resident of the Philadelphia College Settlement.

ing generation has never learned. Body and mind have hungered and thirsted under conditions so wearisome that when ease comes he acquiesces to its circumstantial pleasures as an old person whose senses tire and dull, acquiesces to the fall of the cards in the palling game of life.

Against the parti-colored background of our city life he is a somewhat lonely and pathetic figure, in a free land still an exile by inheritance, unwilling to adopt and unable to understand new ways of life and happiness, and in the new ways the conduct of his own children most bewilders and alarms him; and his ignorance of English befogs his conjectures as to the meaning of their Americanisms. Their days he knows are long days, filled sometimes with the easy routine of school and oftener with hard work in tailor shop, department store or factory,—in any niche of our more or less ramshackle foundations of industry. But their nights are most certainly not spent as his are, in the study of the Word, or even by the quiet light of the home lamp.

To the parents this is anxiety; to those who work for a more unified national life through the acquaintance of all the new elements of population with established manners and customs it is a hopeful sign. They find a richness of promise in the young Russian Jewish citizens, who, living under the severest economic pressure, in an environment which has received but a blurred impress from art and culture, have yet preserved serene good temper and a dauntless spirit. Given such natures, already equipped with a strong mentality, the lever of civic machinery by which the mass may raise itself to a higher social and æsthetic plane is not hard to find or difficult to operate.

Some civic educators express the opinion that the uplift of the whole can be accomplished by a general system of extensive, organized, and endowed amusements, the programme which shall produce an ultimate art and culture as the school programme endeavors to produce them.

In the old world ostracism under which the Jew developed circumscribed his pleasures until they were nearly coincident, one may say, with the mental and moral activities which were intensely racial and aloof.

What opportunities for amusement does Philadelphia offer?

They are bounded by easy access to a few cheap theatres, many cheaper dance halls, and occasional rooms given over

by scattered regenerative agencies to higher social purposes. First in its formative influence is the theatre, after which comes that distinct class of pleasures clustering about the desolate dance hall: the Pleasure Social, the Hall Wedding, the Dancing Class, the Ball or Masquerade Dance for Charity, and the Literary Concert and Ball of the political and industrial bodies. About the last group are found debating, literary, and dramatic societies, dancing and social clubs, and Sunday school and philanthropic entertainments conducted by Jews of an up-town district.

There were three play houses patronized by Russian Jews, and by comparing the policies of these houses with those of neighboring theatres not frequented by the Jews it is easy to determine the quality which attracts the Ghetto population. The least successful of the three was the theatre on Arch Street, which was conducted as a Yiddish play house for a while, and the reason for this anomaly is due in part to its "old fashioned" plays and to the fact that the language used was Judeo-German, a jargon which the young people not only do not wish to remember but pretend they do not know. Many young men and women, whose weekly evenings at the theatre is as regular a function as their wage payments, expressed surprise and amusement when told that systematic visits had been paid to the Arch Street Theatre.<sup>1</sup> They thought it all right for the "green-horn," but probably a mistake in judgment on the part of those of us sufficiently acclimated to "know the ropes." "That? Why ain't it a rank play? Something about Siberia, ain't it? Now, you ought to see 'The Electrician.' There's a great coon song in it; it goes this way \* \* \* \* \*" If the older Jews were theatre-going and amusement-seeking people, a house so centrally located, offering plays based on the most vivid realities of racial and religious life, would do a thriving business.

The "Standard," centrally located at Twelfth and South Streets, the business section of the Ghetto, presents a weekly bill with afternoon and evening performances. A stock company has occupied it for several years, and its members are neighborhood exemplars and household names. The personal and stage morals of each player are weighed and pronounced upon, from the virtues of the leading woman to the dramatic atrocities of the villain, whose private ca-

<sup>1</sup> The Academy of Music is now used occasionally for a Yiddish performance. There is also an up-town Yiddish theatre of a lower grade.

reer supposedly made a girl of fifteen remark: "Not one of our crowd would be found dead walking the street with him." It is, however, the custom of her coterie to follow him on the other side, drawn by the attraction of a bad name.

On the whole, the stock company does better work than might be expected from its weekly change of bill and its double daily performance. Old popular plays of five acts, supplemented by long *entre-acte* vaudeville turns, often extend the matinee from two until six o'clock. "The Two Orphans," "The Three Musketeers" and the greatest "charmer" of them all, "The Black Flag," are given yearly to large audiences which can anticipate the details of every act. More recently, melodramas of American life, "Hero, the Warm Spring Indian Chief," "M'liss," "The Span of Life," and "The Fire Patrol," have been added to the repertoire and may be depended upon to furnish an appalling amount of misinformation concerning the manners and the customs of our country. But this failure to picture national characteristics is thrust into the background when the cunning of the playwright stirs the crowd to accurate and vehement reactions on all moral issues.

Ask the cynic and the doubter of his kind, he who has been saddened by the photographs of the seamy side of life shown by our first-rate theatres, to come to this theatre and buy a ten-cent seat beside the gallery loafers and unskilled working-boys. He will look down upon the floor crowded with young men and women, trouping in from nearby shops, markets and factories; clerks, and garment-workers of the upper class of industry,—who can pay thirty cents for an orchestra seat, and an additional dime for the wares of refreshment vendors. He will note that the majority of the audience are Judeo-Americans of the first generation, and that they jump to their feet, not like the sons of their fathers, but with a native nervous thrill when virtue is for the moment overborne by vice or when real flames envelop the heroine. If the hero demands the whereabouts of the concealed heroine some self-forgetful person in the audience tells him. Applause, hisses, groans, advice, are heaped upon the stage folk. Given this hearty interest in simple old tales of love and hate, it is not necessary to touch the coarse or the immoral. Only once during the period of personal attendance did a performer do a turn based on dubious anecdotes, and his was the only act that day that did not receive hearty applause. The vaudeville is often horse-play



and the songs are rank bathos and silliness murdered by ruined voices; the stage settings are drearily inadequate and the mechanisms creak; yet here an average number of eighteen hundred people daily run the gamut of human emotions and are molded by the deportment of the players.

We are proud of the marked compliment paid us by the management, whose playhouse in another part of the city is wholly vicious, in thus recognizing the sound morale in our district.

The "National" attracts a different patronage. It is ten squares north of the Standard, at Callowhill and Tenth Streets and outside of the geographical bounds occupied by the Russian Jews. Prices of admission range from 75 to 15 cents, and the plays are given by second rate and third rate road companies. Scenery and property are richer than they are at the Standard, and the place is sensational but not spectacular. There is little glare, glitter, or fanfare, but an abundance of the heavily tragic relieved by series of the lightly comic. "The Man of Mystery" and "The Great Train Robbery" enjoyed long runs this season, and the "Acrobatic Farce" of "Eight Bells," with its tumbling fooleries, crowded the house to suffocation. A large share of its patronage is drawn from the downtown shop-keepers whose social aspirations point northward, warning them not to mingle with the democratic throngs at the Standard; from grammar and high school pupils; from the higher ranks of labor—the men who belong to unions and read the literature of their craft; and from the over-running swarms of boys who know every coign of fun from Kensington to Point Breeze. Traditions of intellectuality propelling this mass were revealed when the Jewish play "Zorah" was given here. By the low murmurs of sympathy and applause which greeted incidents of Russian autocracy, of hasty flight, of stern execution, persecution of the Jewish professional class, religious meekness and filial devotion, one knew that many of the audience criticised the verities at first hand. Threats of Siberian torture had sounded before, under different circumstances, in the ears of university-bred and professionally trained fathers of these auditors. It is an oversight on the part of our society that mental pabulum is not offered instead of the froth with which this strong body is fain to satisfy itself.

The Pleasure Social and its causes measure the lack of

any adequate outlet for hospitable impulse and a gracious well-mannered expression of it. The Jew is instinctively hospitable and the quality enters into and complicates his confused attempt to solve the social problem of his life. He greatly desires to be entertained, to entertain, and to adjust to his persistent money stringency the degree of excitation made necessary by his early indulgence in highly spiced amusements.

His own home cannot meet his requirements in this direction. The rooms are seldom large enough to accommodate a number of his friends and the custom of inviting one or two of them to dine with him is almost unknown. Indeed, the formal sitting down to food is not usual enough to make a social function of the act. There is in general but one small, poorly lighted room, common in the evening to the old people and the children, so that the sense of something different and brighter and dressed up is altogether missing. From these conditions has developed the Pleasure Social, which after Hall Weddings is the most frequent form of social intercourse.

There are three distinct kinds of social. The first, as the name implies, is a friendly group of a dozen or more young men combined for pleasure with the sub-motive of pecuniary profit; the second is a business association of three or more men giving dances under club names for profit alone; and lastly the "chartered social," a gambling concern masquerading as "The Early Rose," "The Jolly Fifteen," "The Jolly Bunch," or the "Ad Libitum." In order to rent a room where cards may be played regularly and without interruption it is necessary to hold a charter, and, by suggestion, clubs taking a charter may not be in good repute. Therefore, pleasure-seeking young people hesitate to do so even though it would be a step toward a more permanent organization than they usually succeed in maintaining without an assured meeting place. The leading spirits weigh the prospects, drop in to talk it over with the girls, canvass it with members of last winter's defunct clubs, and at length choose a name and elect officers. After a few weeks, if wages are good, they may hire a small, cheap, dirty hall. Each member invites a "lady friend," and they give a tentative private "spiel." However successful it may be it does not establish the Social. For if it rests its claim to recognition at this point, scoffers will say of it, "Them? nothin' but cheap lovers!" So an

elaborate affair is projected by generalship and daring, at a date when the market does not seem to be overcrowded with big public balls. It is called to the attention of pleasure seekers by window placards, reading like this:

## ROUDIOS SOCIAL

December 2nd

Kilgallon, America's White Champion CAKE WALKER  
Last Chance to see him prior to him going to NEW YORK

PRIZE WALTZ for up-towners and down-towners

GREAT SPORT

Ad. 15 cents.

Pennsylvania Hall

Sometimes a swell Social, a very aristocrat distinguished among its fellows because it is three or four years old, pays its heaviest expenses by the advertisements on its dance programmes. When the financial strain is thus relieved before the day arrives the occasion is a gala one, and the promoters exercise a simpler hospitality than is possible when it is necessary that strangers buy beer to pay for the orchestra. The larger halls, Pennsylvania or Washington, may be rented for \$25.00; the orchestra hired for \$12.00 or \$15.00; and the bar stocked with multiple kegs of beer and bottles of soda, whiskey, wine, according to taste. To these expenses add the printing of window placards and a large number of tickets, prizes for cake walk and waltz, and it is evident that the expenditure is large and that possible loss may be heavy.

The assertion upon the tickets that admission will be fifteen cents is usually no more than current fiction, for the cards are distributed as advertisements, the profits being reckoned by the ward-robe fee levied upon all comers, and by the returns from the bar. A movement toward higher prices is noted. It is possibly a desire to raise a barrier against the chance entrance of any passer-by. At any rate the members now give complimentary tickets in numbers to their acquaintances, whereas the total stranger is confronted with the admission fee of fifteen cents plus ten cents "ward-robe."

If this process of selection is more than a season's fashion it will in a measure arrest the worst tendency of the Social — the unchecked publicity which kills the sense of

personal responsibility in living up to any defined standards of behavior. On the other hand, if the Social's ball advances on its present lines a few years longer, the conditions it is creating by its entire lack of supervision by mature and steady people, its indiscriminate contact with some vicious phases of our city life and — if the adjective is not too far fetched — by a touch of the French in masque dancing, all these will set a problem before the Jews which in the guarded Russian days they have been blessed in escaping.

In illustration of the occasional use of this freedom suddenly thrust upon young people strictly reared by parents and rabbis, one incident may serve. At a much heralded Fifth Annual Ball given by a Social whose boast it is that it has always barred the "hoboes" from its functions by high admission prices and that it never admits a "lobster" to membership, the president, a nineteen-year-old cutter in a fashionable tailor-shop, shook hands with his incoming acquaintances with a somewhat unusual manner of kindly interest. "I hope youse will entjoy the evening" was his formal welcome. Perhaps he had been drinking before he came, perhaps not, but half an hour later, dazed and wandering, he approached a guest and her escort and quavered, "If youse want a good time why don't you go to the bar, boy?" He continued in this state, drinking with his "lady-friend" who, according to custom, ordered soda, until the girl decided to take him away. She was unwilling to expose him to the wrath of his people and guided him along the streets to her own home at four o'clock in the morning. Her parents sheltered him there until he was sober enough to take care of himself.

The occurrence is not usual, but it was not adversely criticised by the circle which heard of it. Some of the comments summed it up as a good joke on him and a bit of luck that the girl had a "good head on her."

Although the inducement to drink is always present, noticeable drunkenness is seldom seen. The racial temperateness bred by a stern environment has not yet been appreciably encroached upon by a laxer habit of life. Flushed faces, restless eyes, and stumbling sibilants are chiefly indicative of the frequent treats; even in the small hours the large majority is no more than merry. In the early part of the evening it seems scarcely that. First im-



pressions are indeed dispiriting. The room is cold, half filled, and every sound echoes from its unclean, barren walls. There is a little desultory music which does not affect the young men huddled on one row of benches or the young women opposite on another. Spirits are apparently at a low ebb. Suddenly the big drum booms, the fiddle squalls horribly with every vocal cord, the clarionet playfully caterwauls, the piano emits fearful jangles, people jump into the air, electrified by this orchestral joke, and the dance begins. It moves easily without other diversions until midnight, when a Grand Prize Cake Walk is announced and babies of four years, with other contestants ranging to twenty-five years, gather at one end of the room.

They are fantastically and hideously dressed, the little girls in short fluffy skirts, soiled fancy shoes and stockings, hair floating or strangely coiffured, necks and arms bare, and prize medals won at cake walks of other socials, proudly decorating their little chests. The young men appear as darkies, Uncle Sam or vaudeville tramps, their faces grotesquely painted with ugly daubs. Pair by pair they go down the lines of clapping spectators, through the contortions of the cake walk. A child of ten years may dance with a young man of thirty. Many couples are, in fact, semi-professional walkers who go from one hall to another, competing for prizes. Such rounds are more frequently made by Italians and "Americans" than by Jews. The performance itself is a vulgar and debasing exhibition rapidly becoming worse. Its tendencies are vicious, and although the majority of onlookers, familiar with its easy descent, evidently enjoy it, yet expostulatory murmurs are heard here and there.

After the customary "walk," general dancing continues an hour or two, when the Prize Waltz, either double or single or both, is announced. Correct form, conventional steps, are not winning methods, but novelties are. The girl who can whirl pivot-like an incredible number of times is the "champeen." Others who undulate with fewest points of contact with the floor also take prizes.

When the ball is a masquerade the fun naturally marches a little faster. More prizes are offered and "the most amusing, the most character, the most beautiful" and so on, being individually rewarded, makes it worth while for a minority to spend time and money on cos-

tumes. Fifty maskers among four hundred non-maskers can change the entire atmosphere of a night. To schottische against a clown walking across the dancing space upon his hands, to dash him prone, to be pursued by him in gesticulating vengeance, to have your lancers set stampeded by a pair of Polish peasants, cracking their long whips about your ears and threatening you in an incomprehensible tongue,—this makes all hail fellows very well met.

It is a picture tinted with an old world, continental tone, but emphatically there is among the Jews themselves no indecorum, no ever-present conscious principle of evil in the fun, which is but a coarser expression of the buffoonery that sometimes animates the New England husking bee. Judaism and Puritanism both are faithful watchdogs. But it is a certainty that the principle of evil is just at the door. On one Halloween, masked parties made the tour of public halls and after midnight began to arrive at a Jewish Pleasure Social Ball. One party not masked consisted of a number of women who came in quietly. They looked like American sales girls and were unobtrusively dressed in silk shirt waists and dark skirts. But they were slightly rouged, their eyes were darkened, and upon them was the undefinable stamp of the street. They ordered beer and fell into casual talk with young men at the same table. In pairs they joined the dancers and carelessly mingled with the Jewish maidens of the set. They were invited to dance as often as was anybody else and, since an introduction to a partner is not a necessary preliminary, there are no checks placed by custom upon the number of acquaintances these women of a separate world can make in a single evening. This is but one of many indications that the younger American generation of Jews has neither the social desire nor the religious scruple to keep itself to itself which has been the basic principle with its Russian born parents.

The distinction between the ball given by the genuine Pleasure Social and the business ball of the pseudo-social is entirely economic. The business ball tends to manifest itself as an incipient trust, borrowing somewhat from the better developed corporate creature in the field of more material necessities and yet not restrained by standards of living or of æsthetic tastes. An analogy of the Business Social may exist in the middle man who arranges for his

employer the entertainments at a summer resort. The latter, however, acts upon instructions, whereas the manager of the Business Social receives no orders from society. He offers what he will and pockets the returns. If "the push" enjoys cake walks, he invites us to one gayer than that of last week; if we want a masquerade he advertises the article with more prizes, more promenades, more specialties, and cheaper drinks than the less skilled promoter dares to promise. He is the "soulless corporation" entity, and his influence is felt.

The third class, the "Chartered Social," as a gambling club meeting behind closed doors in an unsocial fashion, is outside the legitimate fields of fun. It thrives on the gambling trait in the Jewish character, and manifests itself in raffles, lotteries, policy playing, and that elaborate underground system in chance which is a symptom of social disorder.

Hall Weddings outnumber the Social Balls nearly ten to one. The ancient Mosaic customs, the ceremonial dance, the tearful kissing, the cries of mazel tov (good luck), suggest permanence, privacy, affairs between friends, and family celebrations. But the impression is false and springs from the fact that the world-loved lover is here the centre of things, and belongs to the jovial stranger within the gates as well as to the numerically insignificant circle of personal acquaintances. To join a wedding party it sometimes costs nothing at all, sometimes ten cents, which is a low price to pay for the combined pleasures of a dance, a pageant, and a feast. None is denied admission. Neither the work-grimed boy, who, seeking what he may devour, drops in on his way home from his daily grind, is questioned, nor the society stranger who wears a celluloid, perhaps a linen collar, and also frankly exploits the occasion.

The bride and groom, reckoning upon scores of such guests among the hundreds of friends' friends formally invited by card, often spend literally their last cent upon their entertainment. Yet it is cheerfully offered as a sacrifice to fate and enjoyed as an augury of future prosperity. Not long ago at the wedding of a daughter of a family desperately poor, the various sources of supply were drained to the bottom. The newly-made husband and wife were bankrupt, but every guest was fed with chicken, potatoes, bread, fruit and cake, nor were the beer



and whiskey allowed to ebb. The pair was radiant and yet — To-morrow loomed from the wreckage on the tables. The groom looked at his bride: "Well, girl, we got married on our nerve." She smiled and murmured, "Yes, something fierce, ain't it?"

A synagogue ceremony increases the wedding expenses so heavily that the number of such ceremonies is falling off year by year. It is also necessary to approximate punctuality, an unlovely condition guests do not like to face. If a synagogue service is dated for six o'clock it must take place between that hour and eight when the wedding-party is expected at the Hall to receive its guests. The Hall wedding invitation announces that the wedding ceremony will take place at six. An hour later carriages call for the nearest friends of the pair and then proceed to the groom's home. Thence in procession they go for the bride and escort her to the ball. There in front of a stage upon a raised platform painted with the immemorial sacred insignia of the Hebrew faith and punctuated with red, white and blue electric lights, the pair receive their friends. Women cry, men kiss each other and the bridal couple wait restive until the hall is full, frightened when it is, since this is an indication that the ceremony will soon take place. When the last stragglers presumably have arrived between ten and eleven o'clock, a large platform surmounted by the chuppah (marriage canopy) is pushed into the middle of the floor. Willing hands are laid upon it, for whoever pushes is "forgiven many sins."

The orchestra plays the latest two-step and the groom, followed by ten friends holding candles aloft, slowly goes to meet his bride. Half solemn, half laughing, the bridal party marches under the canopy. The rabbi lifts his voice in the strange wail of the ritual. The onlookers laugh and whisper, and some old man beside the groom flashes his sombre eyes upon the offenders. He lifts his candle and peers at them. "Be silent there," he cries.

The music begins again and frivolling couples, under its influence, break from the mass and dance enthusiastically over the cleared space. When the glass is broken and the wine is drunk, the bridal party is kissed all around amid cries of "good luck" and the music of shear (a Bulgarian quadrille). All the guests form the wedding march round and round the hall, which terminates in the move toward the supper room. On the moment, the leisurely progress



waxes without disguise into a rush for place and the feast becomes a plunge for food. Instantly the food disappears from the plates, the bottled beer is seized, a dozen forks dive into the scattered platters of fish or chicken or potato, and supper is over in a twinkling. Healths are drunk, congratulatory telegrams are read (fakes, say the critics), and the wedded pair is taken to the rabbi's corner for a last word of blessing.

The guests dance till four o'clock,—strange old world dances to tuneless music; peasant dances from Roumania, Austria and Russia; competitive dances between men, circling dances of women whirling, laughing and embracing each other. It is greatly enjoyed by all except the bride, who is often desperately tired and ill after her twenty-four hours' fast. But etiquette demands that she remain until the fun is abandoned, and she bravely keeps at her post. She goes at length to her new home and another day finds her going to market while her husband is at work again in the old place in shop or factory.

The "Dancing Class" usually meets in a second story room over a shop or in a tenement. It is conducted by a man or men who may know how to dance but who do not know how to teach. There is evidently no appreciation of the value of etiquette and convention as supplements of the waltz step. The "class" does as it pleases and attends the "benefits" which the teacher gives his "colleague" and those which the "colleague" gratefully arranges for the teacher. The attendance on class nights, Friday by choice, is not very large, but there are many classes in the entire district. The same young people may be found in the same place night after night dancing for the entire evening with the same partner. In the course of time these partners develop specialties of their own which, when carried to a certain degree of perfection, promote them as prize waltzers at public balls or to the rank of cake walkers. The class may be mixed in its nationalities. Jews, Italians, Irish, and "Americans" meet amiably, waiving all differences of race and religion but clinging to personal differences in step and bearing.

In the amusements developed by industrial and political parties and literary and charitable societies, there is at length accented that intellectual quality, that spontaneous mental activity of the Russian Jewish mind, which reveals to the observation the scholar garbed as the factory hand.

Here is higher thinking, frequently yoked with plainer living than that known to the theatre-going Pleasure Social population. The distinction is not that named the economic "standard of living" which falls into the molds cast by the student of sociology, but rather that strong and intangible distinction between those individuals who spiritually aspire and those who do not.

In fact, the pressure of material wants seems to bear more heavily upon these mentally active thousands than it does upon their fellows living upon the same economic plane. The latter spend the larger share of their wages upon personal decorations, the former upon the acquirement of invisible goods. They would rather engage a party leader to speak to them than to attract patrons with the glare of a hired band. They choose to pay the traveling expenses of an out-of-town "Yiddishe" poet rather than to put the money into the treasurer's hands whence it ultimately converts itself into neckties and cigars. In practice, the dancing half of "Concert and Ball" or "Speeches and Ball" is tacitly postponed until the long programme has been enjoyed to its final midnight number. Literary and charitable societies incline to addresses, recitations, songs, and piano and violin music, and legerdemain. The programmes of the two great parties, Social Labor and Social Democratic, are made of the sterner stuff of political and industrial agitation; the charitable and literary societies view our situation as less acutely serious, and arrange their material without propaganda. If the material is original with the person who presents it so much more does the audience enjoy it. If not, it is received with sufficient attention, although the listeners also talk together with a free and easy appreciation of the social motive of the hour.

The programme of the Russian Tea Party given from time to time by unofficial individuals to aid persons or to further plans not falling under a formal charity, fairly represents this section of amusements. A home-sick, broken-down girl had been saying for some time that she would never be well unless she could go back to Odessa, and accordingly the proceeds of the next Russian Tea Party were given to her. The services of fifteen volunteer performers were accepted. The first one came upon the stage at half past nine o'clock. Piano solos and duets, vocal solos and duets, legerdemain and recitation alternated,

with intermission, while tea was served from shining samovars, and bread and apples were piled again upon the tables. There was some noise and confusion during the music, but when a vest-making poet recited a long poem in classical Hebrew, satirizing the poet's income from his verse and the comparative wealth of the tailoring trade, the house quieted to absorbed attention. They seized it hungrily, this product of mind, and they called the author back again and again. They received each new poem with intuitive appreciation of a well turned phrase and a critical survey of the art for the art's sake. When the poet smiled and pointed to their "wounds," they smiled too; at a hint of playfulness mirth lightened grave faces. There were ripples of laughter here and there and it seemed as if sunlight had flashed across the room.

The labor parties and the labor unions attain perhaps the highest level of excellence. Native born men of reputation are asked to speak—a Socialist mayor was warmly welcomed—and there is a sustained interest in American civics and in practical and Utopian legislation leading to industrial relief.

Their balls are not so much balls as opportunities for general conversations, friendly smoking, and food. The anarchists, for several years, have varied the winter's routine by making of their Grand Annual Ball a visual satire upon the institutions of church and state. Young men dressed as Cossacks, policemen or Royal Guardsmen, patrol the hall and when "the people," armed with whistles, give shrill signals they throw themselves upon a bystander and drag him to a buffoon judge. He mouths at the offender and fines him five cents for the good of the anarchist propaganda. A priest of the Greek church marries couples for five cents under the Jewish chuppah, and these unions have in more than one case formed the sole ceremonial basis of an American home. There is much laughter and merriment as the anarchist "priest" goes through his mummary. It is a surprise to learn that his gibberish has in truth made a marriage. All the time while whistles and shrieks of soldiers and people fill the air and while the "priest" intones, persistent hawkers cry, "Buy bar tickets! Buy bar tickets!" and thrust forward checks entitling one to drink. Many buy, induced by a business trick of the management, which turns on the steam heat, closes the windows, and so generates an

almost insufferable atmosphere with its concomitant thirst. The green-horn on these occasions is subjected to sore-throat, dizziness and general malaise until he ceases to be a green-horn.

From this gaiety that stings and fun brewed in bitterness, from the boisterous laughter of a group whose criticism of Society is anarchy, it is but a step to gaiety that seeks to soothe, to fun springing from sympathy and the disciplined quiet of another group whose criticism of Society is without a party name. Here and there and far apart are the regenerative agencies, the endowed club rooms, the social settlements, and the philanthropies, all overcrowded and closing their doors to those who would say "yes" to an invitation to enter. Everywhere are those other agencies which would make for the brutalization of their habitués were it not for the innate fineness of those habitués themselves. They are trained to the desire for better things and they do not know how to find them in America. Wherever they can gain a foothold, a corner for their debates, literary societies persevere and thrive. A rare evening of good music echoes for months in the memories of the young men and women who almost nightly hear the clattering discords of the dance-hall; a lecture on the unseen beauties of our environment arrests the gaze upon quaint doorways and curling smoke. In this great neglected garden of human-kind the gardeners are too few. Sometimes the greatest pity and pathos of it all seems to be the fertility of the field which awaits the seeds of Order, Beauty, and Knowledge so seldom flung within its boundaries.



## (C) CHICAGO

In general the Russian Jew takes his amusements seriously. It is no mad endeavor to be epigrammatic which induces the statement that his amusement is almost a business, his business all but his amusement. Persecution in the old country, the struggle for existence in the new, have been anything but conducive to lightness of heart or of touch. It is enticing to enter on the subject of the philosophy of amusements, to make comparisons and to draw wider conclusions, but the limits of this paper forbid.

The breaking of a glass in the orthodox wedding ceremony of the Russian Jew is deeply symbolical of every amusement of the Ghetto. The glass is broken — so runs the explanation — to warn the Jew that he must not completely surrender himself to mirth no matter how festive the occasion: Zion lies in ruin and it behooves the sons of the Covenant to be cast down until its walls be built up. Metaphorically the glass is broken in the very comedies of the Yiddish theatres. The sound of its shattering runs through the strains of Jewish folk music, you hear it in the heavy mongrel tones of the Yiddish jargon itself, and the serious faces of the older folk of our modern American Ghettos are as constrained as if they were ever awaiting the melancholy crash of the fragile stuff of which life itself is made.

The sober cast of Ghetto, of Russian Jewish amusements, becomes strikingly apparent the moment one takes even a cursory bird's-eye-view of the subject in its entirety. While outlining my theme for this series of papers, to take an instance, I found it difficult to draw a hard and fast line between the diversion afforded by the synagogue and its festivals, and the pastimes which are purely secular. I am not sure that a comprehensive paper should not include both; so intimately do the beth hamedrash (house of learning connected with the synagogue) and the religious rites and festivals enter into the amenities of

Ghetto life, so much does religion contribute to the mere pleasure of the orthodox Russian Jew — pleasure which his less orthodox brethren seek in the secular world without. And beyond all this there are a reason and a philosophy that lie deeper than a superficial observation might at first lead one to suppose; but again the lack of space forbids the digression.

Chicago's one Yiddish theatre, formerly the Metropolitan, next called the Irwin, and afterward Glickman's, was almost exclusively devoted to the presentation of Jewish historical and religious plays, and to operas historical or religious in theme. The literary standard of the dramas presented here was about on a par with those produced in English theatres attended by audiences of the same status in life as the Russian Jews of the Ghetto, and where the price of admission is about the same. In the old Metropolitan theatre I saw a Yiddish adaptation of "The Streets of New York" and "Woman Against Woman," which to the discerning will sum up the story fairly well. "Fairly well" is used advisedly because the standard of comparison is by no means rigid; for now and then Mr. Ellis F. Glickman, who is actor, manager and playwright, too, puts a play on the boards which is superior in most respects to the average attraction offered by the surrounding theatres of the English-speaking districts. The same assertion may be made, within certain bounds, of the acting of the members of Mr. Glickman's Yiddish stock company. The theatre is now closed because it did not comply with the city regulations passed in the fall of 1903 after the disastrous Iroquois fire. There is therefore no regular Yiddish theatre here, "The Pavilion" being merely a hall for vaudeville performances and in no way representing the better intelligence of the Chicago Russian Jew.

However, certain allowances ought to be made for the Yiddish actor when comparing him with the English speaking members of the profession who appeal to audiences of about the same grade at about the same price. In the first place, the Yiddish actor is harder pushed — every week sees a change of bill and he scarcely has had time to commit the lines of one part before he is rehearsing the rôles of a new play (which is the reason, by way of parenthesis, why the prompter is always in evidence); and secondly, the Yiddish actor is nine times out of ten a Yid-

dish singer as well. He is more apt to win popularity among our Chicago Russian Jewish audiences by good singing than by an artistic rendering of a character. The Ghetto audiences are clamorous in their insistence on music and singing, and the encore and the applause always go to the most pleasing song and the best voice. Fine music finds quick appreciation here; and in this one respect certainly both audience and performers are far superior to the audience and performers of the English theatres of a corresponding grade. The orchestra of the Yiddish theatre is excelled by few in Chicago, nor is this in any wise accidental, for the Yiddish theatre without good music were equivalent to a play without scenery.

I saw in the Irwin theatre a play which was a Yiddish adaptation of Hamlet and the whole performance struck me as very much like the play of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet left out. Shakespeare was most neatly adapted out of the tragedy to make room for up-to-date melodramatic situations, for orthodox Jewish religious ceremonies, and for the dramatic triumph of the production — the singing of the Kaddish (prayer for the dead). A line or two copied from the programme may suffice to give even those who were not privileged to see “The Jewish Hamlet” an idea of the broad license that the adapter allowed himself. “Act IV, Scene 2 — Great scene of the Jewish cemetery. Beautiful scenery painted specially for this production. Sad wedding of *Vigder* (Hamlet) and his dead bride *Esther* (Ophelia) according to the Jewish religion.”

From the plays which any manager may supply it is always unsafe to draw conclusions of what the audience may demand. I should be loath to deduce from the mere presentation of this Yiddish Hamlet and plays of its type that Russian Jewish audiences were eager for the spilling of blood and for ultra-sensational situations and scenes. I noticed, and with more than a little rejoicing, that those sins against good taste which were intended to appeal to the sympathies of the audience won applause from the galleries only, and that the parquet, which represented the better class of the Russian Jews of the Ghetto, looked on in ominous silence at what they were unable to translate emotively.

I believe that the younger element of the Ghetto is far more attracted by what lies without than what lies within

the confines of that narrow district, and the constant tendency in amusements, as in other things, is centrifugal. The variety theatres down-town, the play-houses on the surrounding streets, draw a larger audience of young Russian Jews than the Ghetto theatre itself. With very few exceptions—it may be doubted whether the phrase is half strong enough—the younger Russian Jews are neither proud of their Yiddish jargon nor of the ways of their ancestors, and they are only too quick to accept anything that may have an Americanizing influence. In Chicago, at any rate, the Yiddish theatre is not likely to outlast the life of the present generation, and it is fairly open to question whether it will endure that long.

The lodges form a most significant element in the amusement of the Ghetto and contribute not a little to its social life, while like almost every other diversion, they add, or at least carry along, an element of religion and charity. The various lodges, with their numerous orders and divisions, ramify through the entire Ghetto, spreading out in every direction, leaving few families uninfluenced by their existence. The Chicago Ghetto contains seventy-five recorded lodges, thirty-two of which belong to the Order of B'rith Abraham and twenty to the Western Star,—a purely Chicago organization, and the other twenty-three to orders of less prominence. Like their Christian prototypes, the western lodges render an important economic service, namely that of life insurance, which, when all is said and done, serves as the chief reason and the best cause for their existence.

Every once in so often, one of the seventy-five lodges will announce a ball or a party by way of benefit for the impoverished family of a defunct member, and so it is that these orders indirectly contribute their share to the amusement of the Ghetto.

Regarding all balls and parties given in the Russian Jewish district, it may be asserted that there is little if anything to distinguish them from the social functions of a like nature given by Christians of the same status, and what little there is goes in favor of the Russian Jew on the side of decorum. I know from my own studies in the district through which Milwaukee Avenue cuts diagonally, and which represents one of the most cosmopolitan populations in the city of Chicago, that the moral effect of the weekly Saturday night balls and masquerades is anything



but elevating, and that the road to ruin for many a young girl begins here.

Cases of moral depravity resulting from any dance given in the Ghetto district are rare enough to be practically unknown. Of course, home training, custom and other elements must be taken into consideration when weighing the moral problem, and this lies outside of this paper's boundaries.

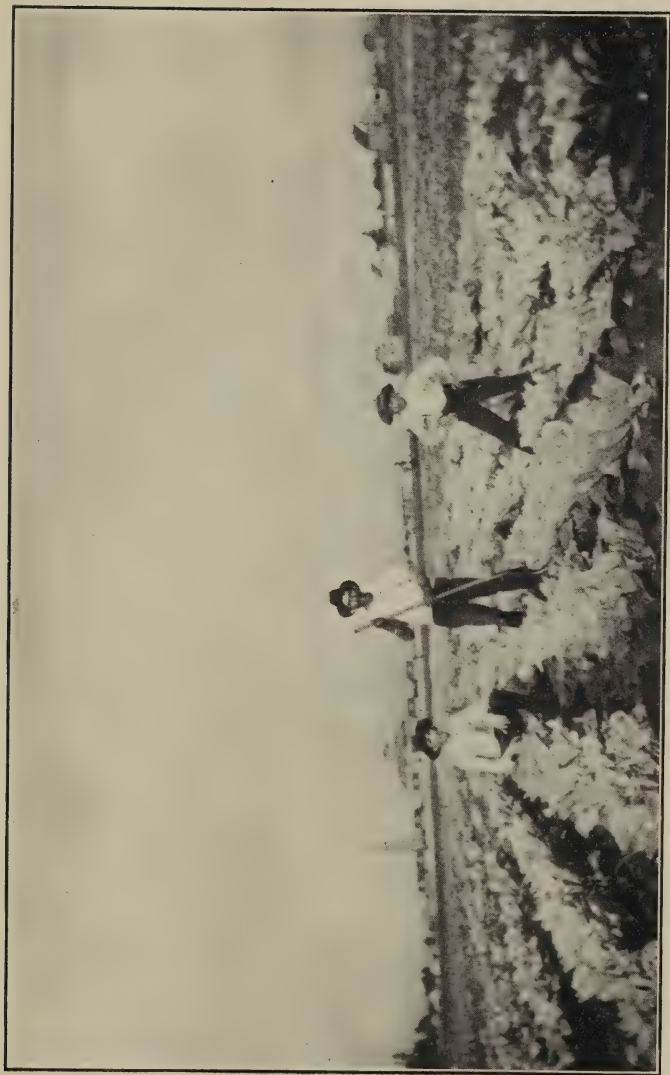
Zionism, which so deeply imbues the life and spirit of our American Ghettos at the present time, may be regarded as the chief religious feature of the lodges, for they are more or less animated by its doctrines and given to the promulgation of its benefits.

The same religious purpose sublimates the one important literary society of our Ghetto, the Hebrew Literary Association, which has a regular meeting place on West Twelfth Street. The library of the association numbers over 2,000 volumes devoted all but exclusively to modern Hebrew literature as contradistinguished from the still more modern Yiddish jargon. The club holds regular Sunday night meetings to listen to lectures in English and Yiddish given by local authorities on Jewish history and literature, and less often to lectures on classic English prose and poetry. The surplus in the treasury of the club is given to the Order of the Knights of Zion, which contains six branches, numbering over 500 members in all, and this society in turn holds regular meetings in Porges, Schwarz, or Turner Halls, to spread a knowledge of Hebrew history, language and literature, with the central object of stimulating the Zionist movement. The younger members of the Knights of Zion Order have their lectures and lessons in English, the older members in Yiddish. Besides the assistance which the Hebrew Literary Association lends the Knights of Zion, it also contributes liberally to a Zionist Sunday school for children, where instruction is given in what may be broadly termed Judaism and Zionism. So again in surveying Ghetto amusements in their entirety, the religious impulse and fervor become salient.

The Lessing Club, which is far removed from the Ghetto district, is composed of wealthier Russian Jewish members than any of the organizations yet mentioned, and is, I believe, higher in social rank. There is nothing in particular to differentiate the Lessing from a hundred and

one other clubs in the city, although the younger members have formed the Lessing Self-Educational Club, which is just what the name would imply. Like the Hebrew Literary Association the Lessing Self-Educational Club employs specialists to give lectures on literature and the arts; and meetings are held with exercises and papers, for the purpose of spreading education and culture.

The feast and ceremonies of the weddings contribute at least an element of amusement, and so by a liberal interpretation may be given a place in the topic. The more orthodox of the Russian Jews are married in the synagogue, the less orthodox, who are in a rapidly growing majority, are married without its walls, either at home or in one of the public halls. In the synagogue weddings the glass dish is broken and the parents of the bride lead her three times around the groom, who stands under the canopy. The postnuptial festivities vary in brilliancy according to the means and liberality of the bride's parents; dancing and music are an important feature and few, if any, weddings are without them. The tendency to copy the forms observed by the non-Ghetto and richer Jews grows stronger with the passing of every day, and the customs peculiar to Jewish weddings are fighting a battle for survival in which apparently they must soon lose. In short, the Americanization of the Russian Jew is thoroughgoing; and his amusements, his customs—all the outer reflections of at least the superficial part of his inner life—are taking on the color and form of his environment, standing out less and less as an entity distinguished by a color and form all its own.



CABBAGE FIELD

*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, near Drexel, Cook County, Ill.*

MILKING TIME

*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, Balfour, N. D.*



NEW RECRUITS AND THEIR POULTRY YARD

*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, near Bangor, Mich.*



VIII  
POLITICS

## POLITICS

### (A) NEW YORK

All political parties, whether national or local, find recruits and adherents among the people who have been forced to leave the realm of the Czars for the past quarter of a century. Contrary to expectation, these new voters are not grouped and collected under the banner of any one political party or any one clan.

Their political activity dates back to the early eighties, when the first wave of the great mass of Russian Jewish immigration reached these shores. It was then that the influx of Russian students began and lent a peculiar color to the character and activities of the Jewish immigrants. As might have been expected, the effect of liberty upon the masses of Russian Jews downtrodden in their mother country was in the beginning apparently disastrous. The anarchists and the socialists found some of their most active supporters among these younger Russian fugitives. The older class, either because of ignorance of politics or by reason of the immediate problem of supporting their usually large families, could not avail themselves of the same educational facilities. Their sons in the short space of time required for citizenship, after a course at the day or evening schools, were able to cope with other electors. But the older immigrants were not long to remain behind in their duties as American citizens. After a remarkably short time, old and young became citizens and set to work to master the fundamental principles of American constitutional government. Questions of the municipality began to engage their attention. Soon they not only mastered the problems that were propounded by the national and state parties, but also became eager students of municipal affairs. So important a factor has the Russian Jewish vote become in recent years that all parties have made a bid for its united support.

We are now brought to the consideration of the position

the Russian Jew has of late years assumed with respect to the dominant political parties. As a rule, each class of voters belonging to a particular nationality before naturalization is claimed *in toto* by either one or the other of the two great political parties. The Russian Jews, however, in spite of the fact that they were distributed among all the parties as to national questions, have in municipal affairs occupied a unique position of late. In the campaign of 1897 they were very largely among the reform forces then organized by the Citizens' Union. Although the almost solid vote of the Russian Jews had little effect upon the general result, at that time it was sufficiently important to arrest the attention of the fusion party in the next municipal campaign of 1901. It is almost incredible, but is nevertheless a fact, that the entire machinery of the fusion campaign was largely directed to that portion of the city mostly inhabited by the Russian Jewish citizens. It was there that the successful candidates for mayor and district attorney made their strongest appeals and received the most encouraging response. Little did they know the character of the citizens they so anxiously tried to convince of the justice of their cause. For never in their wildest dreams did they expect such an upheaval. But those who know the Russian Jew expected nothing less. Be that as it may, however, the phenomenal majorities of Tammany Hall were almost entirely annihilated and the Russian Jew — this time justly — may claim the lion's share in the result of the municipal election of 1901. The Second, Fourth, Eighth, Tenth, Twelfth and Sixteenth Assembly Districts, which in former years ran up insurmountable Tammany majorities, showed such a remarkable change that the other districts in the city normally in favor of reform movements had an easy task. Many have claimed the credit for this remarkable performance; few care to see the facts of the case. To the Russian Jew, with a mind quick to grasp simple business propositions, this problem of municipal reform was a very simple matter. They all remembered the first abortive effort at reform under the Strong administration with its few cases of good work accomplished among the desert of promises unperformed and unfulfilled. They all remembered and suffered during the era of night under Tammany's régime from 1897 to 1901. Given this contrast, placed before the Russian Jew in a clear and intelligent manner, those who

knew him had neither fear nor doubt as to which course he would pursue.

Perhaps the most remarkable phenomenon of this campaign was the revelation of the Russian Jew as an active campaigner. He was not content with voting for the right cause alone;—he appropriated every street corner, every hall, every truck, every temporary platform in the various districts, and for an entire month called upon the passer-by to hear his reasons for supporting the fusion ticket. Young and old, these speakers, in English, in German, and in all the Jargon dialects conceivable, thundered against the iniquities of Tammany Hall and conducted a campaign the like of which New York had not seen. They demonstrated for all time that the Russian Jewish vote is a factor to be reckoned with.

Perhaps the most interesting phenomenon that has challenged our attention in recent years is the appearance of the rapidly developing types of Russian Jewish politicians. From year to year they have progressed along the various lines. Whether as district captains, election watchers, ballot clerks, campaign orators, they are becoming as distinct types as the Irish, the German, or the Yankee politicians.

To them the problems of the ever-changing ballot laws are simple in the extreme. So well are they informed as to the provisions of these that results in their districts are tabulated as accurately as in the most enlightened sections, and their election officers perform all their work with the same speed and accuracy as do the ballot clerks and election officers of other neighborhoods.

As is but natural, in course of time these young aspirants for political preferment pass through a process of crystallization, and the efficient district captains and election clerks of two or three years' experience become budding leaders in the various localities of the Ghetto assembly districts. Their development is gradual and interesting. The Russian Jewish young man, generally a lawyer, who casts his fortunes with Tammany Hall, gradually assumes the habits of his Tammany confrères. He chews, smokes, drinks, gambles, visits the club-rooms religiously, attends the politico-social functions of the year, is prominent in the purchase and dissemination of chowder tickets, and is rewarded, perhaps, by being permitted to play at the Tammany chowder game of poker with the



élite of the district. He is gradually taken into the confidence of the assembly district leader, in most cases called the "old man," and from time to time becomes the recipient of some political news emanating directly from the fountain head of Tammany Hall Democracy—the Democratic Club—or Tammany Hall proper. In time this aspiring politician becomes the constant companion of the leader, and at all dinners, meetings or functions acts as the host and direct personal representative of the all-powerful leader. For the leader in his bailiwick is supreme, and to be in touch with him is to become in course of time a political power. If the young aspirant is faithful, the leader delegates a measure of his authority to his new fledgling, who, encouraged by the tokens of appreciation on the part of his political sponsor, begins to see visions of power and is, possibly, led to aspire to the leadership himself. In a few instances, such young men get the nominations for the minor elective offices.

Usually this is done only to test their fealty, for they are expected to stick to the organization in victory as well as in defeat. The many unsuccessful aspirants for elective office try to find consolation in appointments such as positions in the corporation counsel's and district attorney's offices. So great has been the crop of candidates for these offices of late years, that in every assembly district we find the young men organizing independent Democratic clubs, generally bearing the name of the founder, for the purpose of demonstrating how great a vote they can command and thus either compelling recognition from the organization or, in case of failure, forcing their way into the regular organization of opposite political faith. They have but one ambition, and that is to attain judicial position, and to attain it they seek election as assembly-man or alderman as a stepping stone.

As a rule, these young Russian Jewish men who make their way into Tammany Hall belong to a lower order. In some cases the office holders are taken from the most colorless class, having nothing but regularity and party fealty as their redeeming features. Usually, their education has ended with the completion of a course in the public schools. From that time they, *mutatis mutandis*, are close readers of the *Daily News*, the *World*, and the *Journal*, and keep "posted" on all political questions. Add to this the mellowing influences of the Tammany leaders' discourse

and society, and the young men are fit for any office within the gift of the "people."

The Republican Jewish politician is another remarkable product of the metropolis. Socially he is, perhaps, a grade higher than the former; his parents, by dint of hard work, have amassed a comfortable fortune, and their offspring has possibly had the benefit of a better preliminary education and has come in contact with wealthier young men, who are Republicans in their political affiliations. He, like his Tammany Hall cousin, is a growth gradual in development, but is as positive a character as the former. A little more credit may be due to him by reason of the fact that his party is rarely, if ever, in power in the city of New York and most of his political "patronage" consists of promises, conditioned upon its success and the disruption and defeat of Tammany Hall, a hope upon which every Republican spellbinder loves to dwell. The fact that the state or national elections generally are favorable to his party makes small difference, as little or nothing percolates from the state or national board to these dreamers of the Ghetto. A picturesque character this young "statesman" undoubtedly is. From early citizenship he carries himself like a "statesman." He believes himself treading in the steps of Lincoln, Grant, Garfield, and Blaine, as his cousin in those of Jefferson, Jackson, Tilden, and Cleveland. His garb, his features, his periods, all savor of the statesman to be. Now and then one of the more inventive discovers that a page of Macaulay would fit into some stirring appeal and the speech or essay or paragraph is pressed into service and is sent resounding from a truck or platform over the heads of a host of boys who for the time being become "fellow citizens." The youngsters thus get their first baptism of political eloquence from these campaigners.

The Republican Russian Jewish politician gains admission into the counsels of his party more readily than the Democratic. The power of the district leader is not so absolute as that of the Tammany man and the young men become members of the County Committee; some have even been known to raise their voices in that august assembly of archons of the local Republican party. In one or two cases revolt is ripe against the "carpet-bagger" Republican leader. In time two or three Republi-

can and Democratic assembly district leaders will be none other than the young Russian Jewish politicians.

There is another political factor in the Ghetto which must not be lost sight of. In some respects this is the most remarkable of all. I refer to the Socialists. As a rule the Socialist leaders are students, whose collegiate course has been prematurely cut off by reason of migrations caused by anti-Semitism, or economic distress. After a short apprenticeship, either as a peddler or mechanic or unskilled worker at one of the trades, he quickly regains his equilibrium and — as has often been the case — manages to complete his studies in one of the colleges or universities, of this city. Rarely, if ever, has another nationality furnished so many splendid examples of the hard working student who prosecutes his studies while undergoing great privations in his efforts to support not only himself, but in many cases the family as well.

Regardless of what his privations may be, he throws himself into the study of literature, poetry and political economy and becomes a powerful debater or excellent journalist. One or two such bid fair to rival our ablest editors and campaign speakers. They are generally good Hebrew and Russian scholars and are able to draw upon the literatures of these languages to make their arguments acceptable and clear to all.

The noblest type which has of late become general is the Russian Jewish mugwump; the man who votes and thinks upon the highest planes of civic patriotism without regard to political preferment. As a rule, he is not a candidate for office, is either a professional or business man, and helps to form the great silent vote which in the last few years has upset the calculations of the wiseacres of all political parties. His class are the people who vote "split tickets," who examine the characters of the candidates, and who thus sway the power from party to party as desert and political virtue are divided. These form the great portion of the uncontrollable and unapproachable vote of the Ghetto; so much so that word goes forth from both political camps that time spent on attempted conversion of such voters is time wasted. This class furnishes the most valuable election officers and campaign speakers and the most promising guarantees of the ultimate complete redemption of the Ghetto from the influence of the machines. The arts of the older parties, which their de-



voters have studied for a lifetime, these progressive young voters, and for that matter the old ones as well, have mastered in a remarkably short time. The young people, aided by such journals as the *Times* and the *Evening Post*, and the older people by the German and Jewish newspapers, have become adepts in discussing municipal questions and really form the most formidable menace to the continuance of Tammany rule. No audience in the city is quicker to grasp the questions at issue. Also no speaker is better informed or better prepared by example, quotation and explanation than the middle-aged Ghetto orator. He resorts to comparatively few devices of voice or diction. With examples drawn either from daily life or Biblical lore he brings home an argument to an intelligent audience more forcibly than do his younger and more progressive sons. He cares little for their political veneer. He is a plain spoken advocate of clean streets, parks, public schools, and honest police, and prates not of the immortal principle of the democracy of Jefferson and Jackson, as do his younger descendants.

The following editorial from the *Nation* of December 1, 1904, confirms the observations of the writer: "It is clear . . . that our Jews and Southern Europeans do vote. A more important question, however, is whether they vote with discrimination. Do they always support the same parties; do they ever vote split tickets? A study of the returns for the last four years—including those for the November elections—shows that there are only eight assembly districts in Manhattan which, in both local, State, and national elections, do not invariably go one way. They are Manhattan's 'doubtful districts,' which are apparently influenced by argument, and which may be expected to split their tickets. They are the Fifth, the Eighth, the Tenth, the Sixteenth, the Twenty-first, the Twenty-third, the Twenty-ninth, and the Thirty-first. Some of these are only slightly independent; the Twenty-ninth, for instance, gets into this good company simply because, this year, it voted for Roosevelt and Herrick. The average foreign population of these independent districts is 42 per cent., or just about the average for the whole island. Chiefly important, however, is the fact that this list includes the Eighth, the Tenth, and the Sixteenth Assembly Districts. These are also situated south of Eleventh Street and east of the Bowery.



“By all odds the most interesting is the Eighth. This is the district with the largest foreign population, and its population is very largely Jewish. It has such well-known Ghetto streets as Hester, Delancey, Eldridge, and Allen. Yet politically it is one of the most uncertain sections; the majority of the winning candidates is always small. It voted for Bryan in 1900; for Roosevelt in 1904; for Coler in 1902; for Higgins this year. Its representative at Albany is alternatively a Republican and a Democrat. The Tenth District, which also shows unmistakable signs of independence, is strongly Jewish. This year it voted for Roosevelt and Herrick. The Sixteenth, which also divided on State and national lines, is populated almost exclusively by Jews from Austria-Hungary. Similar independence is evidenced in districts largely native, such as the Fifth, the Twenty-first, and the Twenty-third; but at least it is plain that the Jewish localities, chiefly recruited from immigration, are not lacking in the first essentials of good citizenship.”

It is but natural that so many shades of political leadership should lead to the creation of political organizations. In most instances, these are ephemeral and rarely survive a fatal election. Even in case of success at the polls they usually survive just long enough to provide a number of the ambitious with berths at the public crib. On the other hand, some have builded better than they knew, and have become powerful political bodies to the extent of either carrying the assembly district for good government or gradually making such inroads into the vote of the dominant party that success is but a question of time. The leaders of such political organizations have in a few instances received recognition from the party of good government.

Perhaps no other phase of this discussion can be approached with more certainty than the problem of determining whether the Russian Jewish vote is controllable. Inquiry as to how votes are acquired or controlled by illegitimate or questionable means will demonstrate the contention that the Russian Jewish vote is neither controllable nor purchasable. The Russian Jewish citizens as a body are not an office seeking or office holding class. They have but few representatives in departments not under civil service regulations. The civil service protected officers carry with them independence in voting. The offices whose

occupants change with each administration are sought for by all but Russian Jewish voters. Candidates for such offices are the habitués of the Tammany assembly district clubs—the saloon brigade of candidates for office, who drink with every newcomer. The Russian Jewish citizen will have none of the inferior positions, such as those in the street cleaning or dock department, nor are there Russian Jewish laborers in the department of parks or public works. The higher offices of these departments are not yet within his reach and he therefore concludes to wait his chance. Meanwhile, he continues to demonstrate his fitness, his ability, his readiness, to pass civil service examinations such as are imposed by the post office and custom house.

The club and the saloon are the marts where voters are either “influenced” or bought outright. The class of votes obtained in the latter place are rather risky “investments” in these days of the secret ballot. For he who sells his vote may nevertheless go into the booth and vote as his “conscience” dictates. As to the former method, most Russian Jewish citizens are an industrious class, and think more of earning an honest livelihood than of bartering their votes for cash.

One need but examine the registration lists of a single assembly district, as the writer has done, to convince himself that the Russian Jew is very much in earnest where politics are concerned. The overwhelmingly Republican districts, the best and wealthiest in the city, have an alarmingly large number of citizens who neither register nor vote. An even larger proportion of those who register do not vote. To the Russian Jew the day of election is not a holiday in the sense that he is to have his annual excursions or trips of recreation out of the city. Many days before election, he informs himself as to the merits of the respective candidates, by attending meetings, reading papers, and by discussion at his café or after his lodge meetings. When election day arrives he has made up his mind how to vote and he does vote, neither pleasure nor business exigency preventing him. A great many other citizens of foreign extraction mistake election day and turn it into a riotous feast, to the discomfiture of the election officers, who find it difficult to cope with the curious inventions of the Bacchanalians that wield the power of the ballot in the secrecy of the election booth. Not so with

the Russian Jew. He does not drink anything stronger than tea before he votes and after he has voted he goes about his business without celebrating or rioting. Compared with the American cycling, golfing, automobiling, and football fraternity, who either intentionally forget or do not care for the issues and principles at stake, the Russian Jew is certainly an excellent example of new citizenship.

A most important factor in the political development of the Russian Jew has been the Jewish press. Although published and for the most part sold on the lower East Side, the Yiddish papers have reached the remotest corners of the country.

The oriental substratum in the mind of Russian Jews must be appealed to in a different manner from that of the humdrum, every day, political intelligence of the voter who is swayed by newspaper reading. The Russian Jew examines with the eye of a critic the arguments presented on the editorial page. He who would convince him must put forth his best efforts. The Russian Jew is witty by nature and appreciates the political diatribes which are placed before him by these many advocates of heterogeneous factions. There is a novelty, a charm, an ingenuity about these papers on political questions.

No matter how adaptable the Russian Jew may be and no matter how true the statement that no party can claim him to the exclusion of others, still it is a fact daily more and more apparent, that the independent reform element on municipal questions has become a most alarming sign of the times in the political parties. The younger element who have had a college or university education form the hotbeds of independent voting and reform ideas. As this class is growing larger year by year they will certainly have to be reckoned with by every party which has success at the polls as one of its objects.

If the proportion of Russian Jewish electors to the total vote be a consideration for assigning public office to the representatives of any particular class, the Russian Jews are far behind all others in the distribution of offices. Even if we include the elective offices they receive much the smallest share of party patronage. While it is true that whatever positions are distributed among them are generally positions of importance, still most of these they attain by competitive examination, which in recent years



has really taken the vast majority of offices from the gift of the party in power. It is, therefore, to the elective office or confidential appointive ones that we must direct our attention. In the Federal service, if we exclude a number of specialists or statisticians, there are none. These, too, are civil service appointments. As to those elected to office, our field of vision is of necessity limited by the fact that the Russian Jew has graduated but a very few of such office-holders. An alderman, here and there, two or three assemblymen, probably one justice and a deputy district attorney, and perhaps a deputy corporation counsel, and the list is complete. Taken all in all, these elected representatives of the Russian Jew are not brilliant examples of what they have produced by way of good citizenship. For in those firstlings of elected officers party spirit is developed to an alarming degree and in most cases they simply register the fiat or party caucuses with as scrupulous care and obedience as the most thorough-going machine men. Small wonder, then, that in one case, when a little independence was about to be developed the bold office-holder was promptly called to account and with the fatality of the punishment of the Mafia the victim was denied renomination and his usefulness in the office held was forthwith dispensed with — all because of a too ready desire to air his opinion and discuss questions which were simply to be voted upon. The machine resents nothing so much as disobedience in any form. The elective office-holder is but one small wheel in the scheme of machine government. All that he is expected to do is to obey and to vote; to talk, unless requested so to do, means political annihilation.

It is yet too early, however, to judge the Russian Jewish office-holder of either kind. We have witnessed but the earliest beginning of such careers. The college and university men are still in the early twenties and have not yet had an opportunity to be put upon their mettle. Another ten years will witness the elevation to office of some of these young men; they will compare favorably with other candidates of the older parties, having a fundamental education that will aid them materially in their preparation for the public office which they are bound to occupy.

Time was when a great portion of Russian Jews could be found in the Socialist and Anarchist camps. The Socialist party in particular had its remarkable leaders and



editors, who made such noteworthy strides in these sections of the city that their party spread to almost every state of the Union. Their emissaries organized the party in every state. The Anarchist elements at one time numbered among its hosts a number of Russian Jewish immigrants fresh from the country where they had been oppressed. But as time went on, as prosperity dawned on them, they gradually drifted by way of the Socialist party into temporary political obscurity, only to reappear in one or the other political parties. The Socialist Labor party at one time was the third largest party in the city. By reason of the Social Democratic schism, its numbers have been decimated and we have ardent DeLeonites combating still more ardent followers of Debs with even greater bitterness than they do the other parties. The two sections of the Socialist party today are each firmly held together by rigid platforms, containing very nearly all their declarations of belief and articles of creed. But they have yet to demonstrate that they will ever wield any power in the city as a whole. In one or two assembly districts they are ripe for the election of either an assemblyman or alderman or both. But the Socialist assemblyman or alderman pure and simple is as yet a figment of the imagination, although in a number of instances the candidates are of so high a character that their possible election could be considered as much of a personal tribute as an experiment in having a Socialist in office. It cannot be denied, however, that small as it is, the Socialist party has mastered the principles of active, nay, of aggressive campaigning, and its leaders are remarkably able orators and debaters, and explain and enunciate the principles for which they stand in a manner second to none of the speakers of the other political parties.

And so the stream of Russian Jewish citizens grows through constant accretion, naturalization as well as by the coming of age of the younger immigrants who have been educated in this country. Each day has its number of these industrious craftsmen or business men both at the state courts and Federal courts. To many understanding of the mysteries of English chirography and reading have been denied. And though old and decrepit, many of these men have toiled two and three terms at the evening schools of the city gradually preparing themselves for citizenship.

An examination will disclose hundreds of newly made citizens weekly. A new trade has sprung up in the Jewish

bookstores; thousands and thousands of civil service and citizenship manuals are annually printed and sold for the purpose of enabling immigrants to be admitted to citizenship.

It is not possible even approximately to guess at the number of Russian Jewish voters in this city. With the American education and citizenship come also in many cases the desire to Americanize the names, yea, even the first names of their owners. When Tultchinsky becomes Anthony; Tonkinogy Thomas; Tabatchnikoff Tobias, and Tamashefsky O'Brien or McCarthy, the city record containing a list of voters may tell a deceitful story.

Perhaps the most difficult problem that could be set before an observer of these children of the Ghetto is to form a true estimate of their character as citizens. Some opinions have the ravings of anti-Semitism as their sole inspiration; those who hold them see nothing in this host of newly made citizens save miscreants, and if there be brilliant examples these generous critics regard them merely as exceptions to the rule previously laid down. On the other hand, such impartial observers as Jacob A. Riis, Ida M. Van Etten and others have sent forth into the world different opinions of these Russian Jewish citizens. Thus:

"Politically the Jews possess many characteristics of the best citizens. Their respect and desire for education make them most unlikely to follow an ignorant demagogue, while for a still deeper and more radical reason they make the enlightened selfishness their standard of all political worth. The centuries during which every conscious or unconscious tendency of the government, under which they lived, has been to make their individual and race advancement their single object have developed traits of character most unfavorable to that blind partisanship which is requisite for the successful carrying out of the objects of political organizations like Tammany Hall. The education given by the modern labor movement has, in a great degree, transformed their race-feeling into a class-feeling and they now look with zeal to the advancement of the working people, in whose elevation they recognize that their hope for the future lies.

"The one or two Jewish political demagogues who strive to create a following on the East Side have met with doubtful success. In fact, there does not exist a more unpromising field in New York for the political trickster than

the Jewish quarters of the city. Their quiet, critical analysis of political nostrums is most disheartening to the district leaders of Tammany Hall.”<sup>1</sup>

That the Russian Jew has come to stay is conceded, that his influence in this as well as in other spheres of life will have to be reckoned with, is equally clear.

<sup>1</sup> Ida M. Van Etten, “Russian Jews as Desirable Immigrants,” *Forum*, April, 1893.

## (B) PHILADELPHIA

The Russian Jew comes from a country where despotism holds sway, where he has had little chance for the exercise of political privileges. He comes here with a tradition so different from ours that at first he is bewildered by the political conditions. He observes contradictions and complications. His spirit is foreign to the American and Anglo-Saxon, which seemingly tolerates many abuses until it is ready to act. His attitude is apt to be cynical or indifferent; and in either case he may fall in with the prevailing notions of politics, with all that they imply. Or he may, by virtue of the unsatisfactory condition of his economic life and because of an idealism typical of a certain class of Russian thinkers be in constant revolt against the powers that be, actively joining in the meetings and demonstrations in behalf of the Anarchist or the Socialist cause, and refraining from co-operation with the regular political parties. If the Russian Jew is a young man born on American soil, or one who came here at an early age, he is likely to imbibe the American and Anglo-Saxon tradition, and may be like the ordinary easy-going American, or like the American who "is in it for all it is worth," or of those who are fighting for reform, or finally, among those who desire an entire change of the social system.

The study of practical politics among a particular class will reveal many features of the general condition. The large American cities present the worst sides of American practical politics, and Philadelphia stands out in unholy, pre-eminent glory in this respect, for here the overwhelming control by politicians of both state and city have made possible the corruptions of politics in an extreme degree.

Politics, to the ordinary American mind, imply a business, conducted by a regularly organized band who have secured control of public offices, public franchises, and public influences of all kinds, and use them for their personal purposes, and for extending their authority as non-official controllers of the public purses of the citizens. He



who wishes something in the political line must go to one of this band. In every section of the city, in the various wards and divisions, there are those who are known to have a "pull." They do not necessarily hold office; their power depends on their influence in the political organization. The ordinary American citizen, with his blind worship of party politics, bows to the will of this organization, and is subservient to its leaders.

Should it be a matter of surprise, therefore, that the immigrant from Russian and Eastern Europe, with such a conception placed before him, should succumb to the temptations to which many a so-called American citizen succumbs, or be as indifferent to political effort as this same American citizen? Can it be a matter for wonder if the teachers of practical politics, the "heelers," and the "rounders," are such as we allow to control our wards and divisions, that they graduate from their schools the promising pupils of nationalities and classes whose votes and influence are desired? To any one who knows our politics as conducted it must be clear what sort of tools a politician will use, and we consequently find a coterie of Russian Jewish workers fully as unscrupulous as their leaders; and being poor men, with small ways for the low class work they do, their actions present a most unlovely appearance. But from the point of view of public morality they are not worse than leaders who do their work with all the semblance of decorum.

The wards in which the Russian Jewish population chiefly resides are the First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth, covering an area of nearly two square miles. The boundaries are, Chestnut Street on the north from Delaware River to Seventh Street; the Delaware River on the East to the foot of Mifflin Street; Mifflin Street on the south to Passyunk Avenue; thence north along Passyunk Avenue to Ellsworth Street, to Broad Street; thence with Broad Street as the western boundary to South Street; along South Street to Seventh Street, and up Seventh to Chestnut Street.

It should be noted that there is very little Jewish population in the northern end of this section above Spruce Street.

The number of votes will grow not only because of increased naturalization among those of the population born abroad, but because of the young men coming of age. It

must be borne in mind that we are considering a population which began to migrate to this country in large numbers in 1882, so that only in 1903 did the first American-born descendants of this main body become voters. All others must go through the form of naturalization.

There was a second large stream of immigration in the early nineties, and a larger naturalization as a result of this has doubtless taken place in the last few years, five years being required for the acquiring of citizenship. The younger men, born abroad, but in touch with our institutions, naturally proceed to become naturalized as soon as they attain the age of twenty-one years.

In national politics some of the Russian Jews are Republicans, some Democrats, and some Socialists. With the strongly prevalent Republican party sentiment in this city one would naturally expect to find many in the ranks of this party, yet there was a strong current of feeling for Bryan and Debs in one campaign. In the Third Congressional District fight for a seat in the national House of Representatives, many took an active part for McAleer, the Democratic incumbent, who was running for re-election against the Republican machine candidate. A committee of Jewish representatives, the Hebrew McAleer Campaign Committee, assisted in the campaign, and a number of meetings were held under its auspices.

There can be no question of a strong Socialist sentiment. When a prominent Socialist speaker addresses a meeting he can count upon an audience of fully five hundred persons. The Socialist newspapers are read in goodly numbers. At labor, social and literary gatherings, Socialism is an active, interesting subject of discussion.

I have been much impressed with the nobility of purpose which inspires leading Socialists among the Russian Jewish population. The ordinary politician, the party American, the political reformer even, may regard it as a fanaticism, a vain striving after an impossible ideal. And yet it is helping to educate the community in social responsibility; it stands for a purity which will some day help to cleanse the city of some of its political dirt. Many of the most intelligent Russian Jewish men and women are Socialists. They are animated by a strong propagandist spirit and are helpful to the leaders of the Socialist cause.

The radical and reactionary element of the other extreme is the Anarchist. It is not so strong in numbers as the

Socialist. Most of the members of this party are philosophical Anarchists and not the red-handed agitators pictured by the newspapers.

Mere political reform, or municipal reform, does not find much favor. I remember addressing a society composed of Russian Jews on the subject of political reform, and besides giving my own views quoted those of John Jay Chapman. I was told in the discussion which followed that the description of the political disease as it had been presented was as strong as any of their most radical members could give, but the remedy was "Oh! so weak; it was like attempting to cure a thoroughly diseased body with a porous plaster."

I was not surprised, therefore, to find that there was very little affiliation with the independent municipal party, the Municipal League. Here again they were not different from their neighbors, for it has been difficult to maintain Municipal League organizations in the wards to which our discussion is being confined.

The Jews of older residence here, those of the immigrations before the Russian migration of the early eighties, have always held aloof from any movement looking to the concentration of a so-called Jewish vote, and the formation of any political organization composed wholly of Jews. Such organization is much more possible among the Russian Jewish population, because of its settlement in large masses in one district, with a community interest of race and religion intensified by close social union and mutual responsibilities and needs. In this district there are other nationalities which form distinct groups, such as the Italians and the negroes. There are also Irish and Americans.

The Russian Jews have not voted as a class for one particular party, but have organized distinctive clubs and committees for one party or another. The objections to such organizations are well set forth in a petition to the court in 1895 against the granting of a charter to the Fourth Ward Hebrew Republican Club. It stated that it was "a racial or religious political club," that it was "against public policy in that it tends to the union of church and state;" that its objects "tend to introduce religion into politics and to excite racial and religious prejudice." Adolph Eichholz, who acted as attorney for the objector, wrote as follows to the counsel of the club, expressing views generally held by Jews of older residence:



“ . . . Not only is it opposed to the spirit of American institutions that any set of men belonging to one race or to one religious denomination should band themselves together for political purposes, but it is also reasonably certain that the members of such organizations will be made the victims of unscrupulous schemes. One of the prime motives prompting the filing of these exceptions on the part of a co-religionist is a solicitude for the welfare of the misguided members and prospective members of this and all other so-called ‘ Hebrew ’ and ‘ Jewish ’ political clubs. The organizers of such clubs are, as a rule, men who for their own selfish ends, use this means of impressing party leaders with the fact that they control a large number of ‘ Hebrew ’ votes. Organizations formed upon such lines must necessarily interfere with the elevation of the standard of true citizenship. Hebrew citizens take an interest in politics, and there is no reason why they should not do so after the manner of all other citizens, but their political activity has been and should be solely and purely that of good, loyal, and patriotic American citizens regardless of what may have been the country of their birth and independent of any religious belief or racial connections.

“ In the past those who held more exalted views of citizenship have necessarily been limited to merely persuading others from joining such anti-American organizations. Now that judicial approval is sought it becomes a duty to interpose more formal objections.”

That the agglomeration of masses of foreigners into separate political organizations of voters is subversive of their best interests as citizens there can be no doubt. The Russian Jewish element, like other elements of foreign origin in the down-town section, is in the habit of working unitedly and finds it natural to form political clubs. The common religion is but one feature that differentiates this body from the rest of the community; and the effect of this feature ought not to be exaggerated, where division along racial lines in the lower part of the city is so common.

The attempts to conduct political organizations have met with obstacles among Russian Jews, because of individualism of this population, which owing to jealousies constantly disrupts. The United Citizens’ Club, which was organized for the protection of Jewish immigrants and citizens, and which has a membership of about a thousand, participated in the campaign of the winter of 1904, supporting the Dem-



ocratic ticket. During active political campaigns clubs are organized, but when the excitement of the campaign dies out the interest in the clubs flags, and the promoter of the club, a candidate or a ward leader, often finds it difficult to maintain it. Some of the clubs, like many other clubs, no matter what the class of its members, flourish as card-playing concerns.

The Russian Jewish politician has been able to gain but little in party power in this city. The willing tool of the political boss, he bewails the fact that he cannot control a large Jewish vote, so that his influence will be stronger. As a division "heeler," he controls a number of votes and is rewarded with some petty office, or opportunity, which will enable him to "squeeze" his neighbors.

Public offices held by this population are insignificant in importance and small in number. They include a member of the Board of Education, two common councilmen, several school directors, some police officers, constables, and park employees. The negro must be a much more valuable political worker from the point of view of the office distributors, for of 170 city employees from the Fifth Ward, when inquiry was made some years ago, about 40 were negroes.<sup>1</sup>

When we come to the matter of a controllable vote, the subject is difficult,—that is to say, it is difficult to point out which element of our entire city population is the worst offender in this respect. The Russian Jews doubtless contribute a quota. Some are said to sell their votes outright; others to vote according to the instructions of the police officials who protect them against the rigorous enforcement of ordinances. For example, the push cart dealers and peddlers must have licenses and are required to be kept moving. Police officials can exercise their "discretion" if a peddler will vote as they direct. The dealer who has his shop open on Sunday can secure protection against enforcement of the Sunday law if he is "in with" the police. Many a practice which violates the law can be connived at if the violator will vote the "right way." He may, in addition, have to secure "immunity" through other considerations as well. The system of illicit protection and control among this population does not differ in principle from that in other sections of the city; it merely varies according to the nature of the business. The politicians in control of the

<sup>1</sup> Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, p. 381.

city know the means of exploitation available. The Philadelphia *Ledger*, in an article in its issue of December 11, 1904, on "The Organization and Extortion," contained the following: "The small dealers along South Street and Second Street, Germantown, Frankford and Kensington Avenues are subjected to an almost perpetual demand for both money and services. In the Third and Fifth Wards the merchants are coerced into padding the assessors' lists; to recognize non-resident office-holders as inmates of their own homes, and to hand up money regularly to the accredited representatives of the organization. They get, for their money and service, the right to use the sidewalk beyond the three-foot line for displaying their wares, and they may employ barkers without fear of molestation. The toll upon these merchants ranges all the way from 25 cents to \$5 a week each. The same applies to push cart men and itinerant peddlers, who, in addition to paying the usual peddlers' tax to the city, must submit to petty larceny at the hands of the police, who take all manner of small wares without even saying 'by your leave.' The money and goods thus taken from small dealers and peddlers amounts in the aggregate to thousands of dollars annually."

The Russian Jews as a class are capable of political thought far superior to that of any other foreign element which the slum politician seeks to control, and with the growth of a body of young voters who are coming of age the intelligent voting population will become stronger and stronger. These young men are showing an active interest in political and social subjects, and if their present interest is any indication of their strength of action as voters we may look to a vigorous political element. If they realize their opportunity and are not swamped by the desire for mere material success, they can become a powerful factor which will help to redeem us from the degradation of slum politics.

Many of these young men, brought up in the public schools, living to a considerable degree in the environment of the average American, imbued with the spirit of patriotism, will with the socialists and the thinkers of the older generation, form a body of voters possessing a high, intelligent idea of citizenship. They will have a principle which will place them in the van with those who are working for political and social ideals.

## (C) CHICAGO

While honor is said to be the underlying principle in an aristocracy and fear in a despotic monarchy, civic virtue is fundamental in a republic. The citizen who is fully conscious of his civic duties towards his government and his country, who is willing to lay aside his personal interest for the greatest good of the greatest number of his fellow citizens, is the citizen who preserves our freedom and institutions, and so long as there is a majority of citizens endowed with that sterling quality of civic virtue, so long there will be no danger as to the stability of our republican institutions. Our naturalized citizens, coming now as they do, mostly from countries where either despotism or pretended "honor" is the basic principle of government, very quickly, upon becoming citizens here, realize their new responsibilities, which inspire them with loyalty to the country of their adoption. They are grateful for the confidence reposed in them, in giving them a share in the administration of our government.

To all of this, the Russian Jew is no exception. Having no civil rights in Russia, he seizes the opportunity given him by our laws, and becomes a citizen of the United States. No one can, on the average, be more depended upon to vote rightly on all public questions than the Russian Jew. Whereas the average naturalized citizen leaves behind him a country where his race predominates, and to which he could return in safety in case of adversity, the Russian Jew is not so situated. He comes here to stay. To him this is almost the only country that offers relief and shelter.

The Russian Jew in America is well pleased with the freedom granted him and has not looked to any considerable extent for public office as a means for a livelihood or promotion. In the city of Chicago, and county of Cook, with a Russian Jewish population of about 75,000 and comprising not less than 18,000 voters, only a handful hold public offices, most of them unimportant. An exception is that of Mr. Abel Davis, a Russian Jew, who was elected recorder

of deeds in the election of November, 1904. His nomination was brought about by Russian Jewish Republican clubs. Mr. Davis was a lieutenant in the Spanish-American war, and saw actual service in Cuba. He was for one term a member of the Illinois legislature. Other officials include deputy health inspector, deputy clerks of the court and recorder, and assistant state's attorney.

There is good prospect that in the future the Russian Jews will participate at the primary election of both parties; they will endeavor to elect their own delegates.

The Russian Jews, as a whole, are for personal liberty in the fullest sense of the word. Believing that the Democratic party can be more trusted in safeguarding the personal liberty of the people, and fearing a revival of the Blue Laws in Chicago, they generally vote the Democratic ticket. This is not, however, the general rule in congressional and presidential elections. The following is a table of the votes in the Ninth Ward, the majority of which have been cast by Russian Jews since the year 1900.<sup>1</sup>

City Election, April 4, 1899: For Mayor—Carter, Republican, 2316; Harrison, Democrat, 3130; Altgeld, Independent, 750; Keroin, Prohibitionist, 12.

Presidential Election, November 6th, 1900—McKinley, 3034; Bryan, 3591.

City Election, April 2, 1901: For Mayor—Henecy, 3088; Harrison, 3991.

Congressional and County Election, November 4, 1902: For State Treasurer—Busze, Republican, 2853; Duddleson, Democrat, 2946.

At the city election, which took place on April 7th, 1903, Mayor Harrison, Democrat, carried the ward by 1679 majority over Stewart, Republican.

At the election of November, 1902, a very notable event took place in the 17th Senatorial District, largely populated by Russian Jews, when Clarence S. Darrow, chief counsel for the miners' union before the Anthracite Coal Commission at Philadelphia, was elected to the legislature by a majority of 6000 on an independent ticket.

In the November, 1904, election, the most representative Russian Jewish ward, the Ninth, was carried for Roosevelt by about 900 majority.

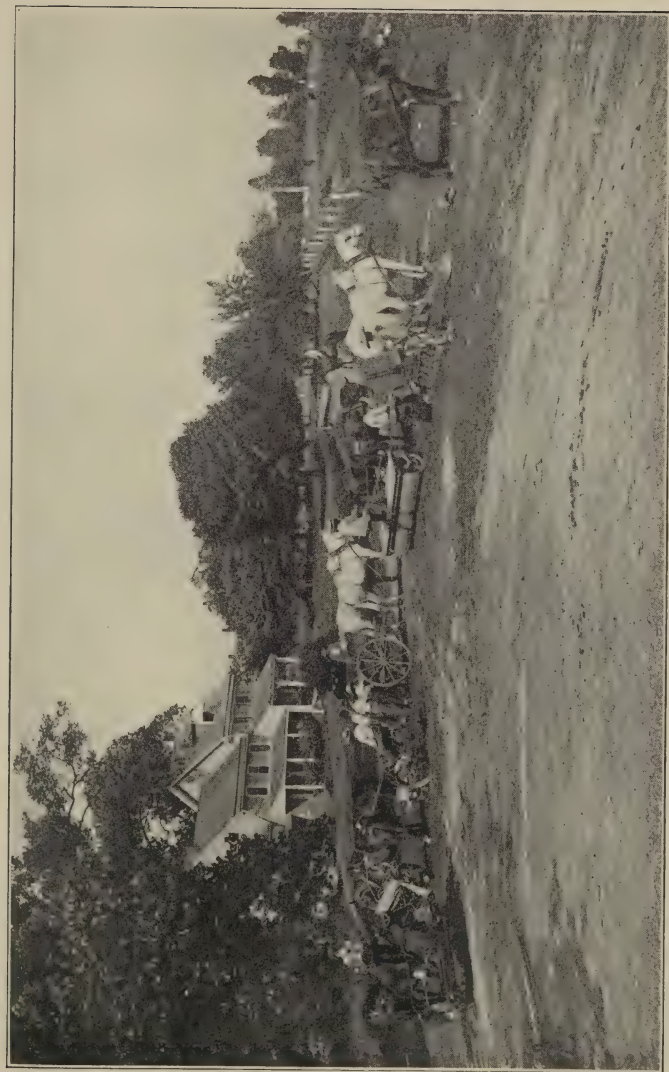
<sup>1</sup> The Russian Jewish settlement embraces the Ninth Ward, part of Tenth, part of Eleventh, part of Nineteenth, part of Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth.



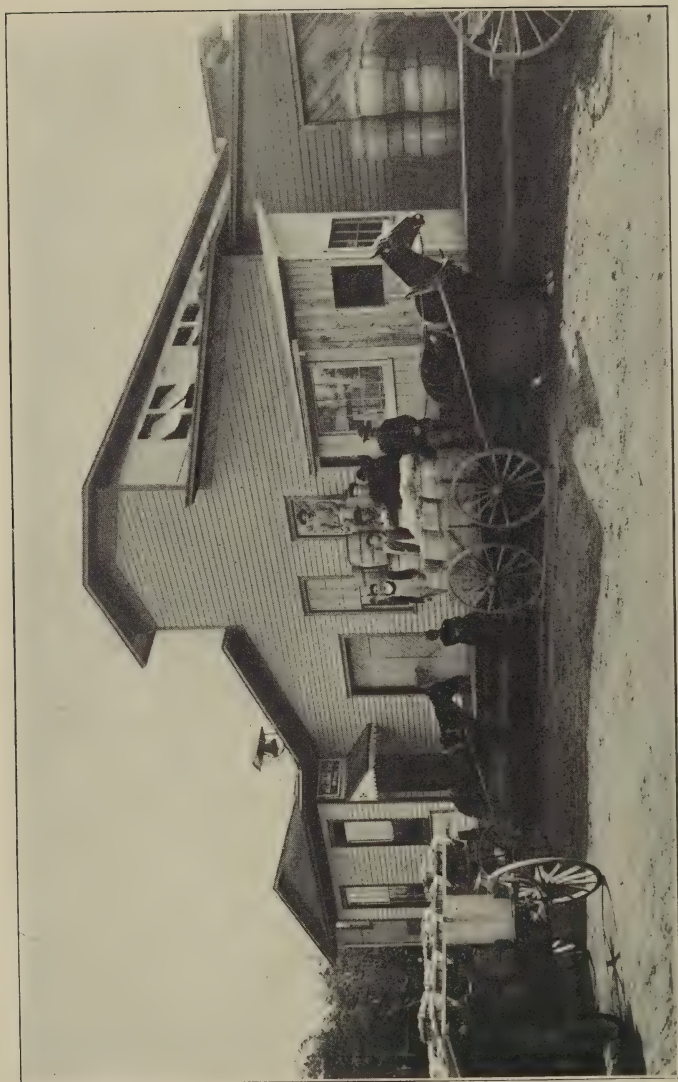
Socialism does not flourish to any considerable extent among the Russian Jews in Chicago. Of all the Russian Jewish voters throughout the city only about 500 cast Socialist votes.

The new generation of the Russian Jews will be the Jews of America. They will lead in thought and morals. As to politics, I believe they will safeguard the interests of the people, and will have in time considerable influence in the government of our country.





BOYS STARTING WITH IMPLEMENTS TO WORK IN THE FIELDS  
*National Farm School, Doylestown, Pa.*



JEWISII FARMERS MARKETING THEIR PRODUCT AT CANNING  
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IX

HEALTH AND SANITATION

## HEALTH AND SANITATION

### (A) NEW YORK

Physically the Jews appear to be inferior to the Anglo-Saxons in the United States. They are about five feet five inches in height on the average, which is more than the Jews in eastern Europe measure. There, it was found that the average stature of the Jews was about five feet three to five feet four inches. It appears that the immigrant Jews, like immigrants of other races, are taller than the average of the stock from which they come. This is best explained by the fact that it is mostly the taller and perhaps also the stronger physically who venture on a long journey to a distant land. In general it can be stated that this shortness of stature of the Jews is primarily due to race influence. It seems that the ancient Jews were also not tall. They are said to have been, compared with the Amorites, sons of Anak, as "grasshoppers in their own sight." It has also been shown that the races and peoples among whom the eastern European Jews have lived for centuries, are mostly of a short stature, as for instance, the Slavonians in Russia, Galicia, and Roumania. Added to this, their abject poverty, the underfeeding, the insanitary conditions of the European Ghettos, have conspired to reduce the physique of the Jew. It is a striking fact that wherever they have been given a chance to recuperate, they have gained one or two inches of stature.<sup>1</sup> Thus the native Jews in New York city, the children of the immigrants, are much taller than their parents, and Joseph Jacobs has found that in London also the West End Jews are taller than their poorer coreligionists in the East End.<sup>2</sup>

Another characteristic of the Jews is their narrow chest. It is known that in the majority of healthy individuals the

<sup>1</sup> For details about the stature of the Jews in the United States, and how it is influenced by heredity and environment, see M. Fishberg, "Materials for the Physical Anthropology of the Eastern European Jews," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> *Studies in Jewish Statistics*, p. 80.

girth of the chest exceeds one-half of their stature. In the case of the Jews it is found that the girth equals or is less than half their height. This, with their poorly developed muscular system and frequency of anæmia, gives them the appearance of sickly people. But considering the fact that for the last two thousand years they have mostly been town dwellers, and in the towns they have mostly inhabited the poorest districts in insanitary conditions, crowded in small, badly ventilated dwellings, as we learn from the histories of the various European Ghettos, it would be surprising if all these adverse conditions had not reduced the physique of the Jews.

Paradoxical though it may seem, the East Side Jews of New York City, notwithstanding their apparent physical inferiority externally are not inferior pathologically — they do not swell the mortality returns of the city; in fact they enjoy an unprecedented longevity, far above most other non-Jewish races of the city. "The Jew, particularly amid large Jewries of the East," says Leroy Beaulieu, "is often small and puny — he looks wretched, sickly, shrunk and pale. But all this should not deceive us; under the frail exterior is concealed an intense vitality. The Jew may be likened to those lean actresses, the *Rachels* and *Sarahs*, who spit blood and seem to have but a spark of life left, and yet who, when they have stepped upon the stage, put forth indomitable strength and energy. Life with them has hidden springs."<sup>1</sup>

On his arrival at New York, the Russian Jew is confronted by sanitary conditions which are as foreign to him as the language of the country. It is of course quite difficult for him to adapt himself to his new surroundings; but my observations, which have been very extensive among the foreign population of New York, have convinced me that the Jew adapts himself to his new environment far more easily and more speedily than his neighbors, the Italians, the Bohemians, the Poles, the Scandinavians, and others.

In New York the immigrant Jew is principally a dweller in the tenement house. Although scattered all over the city a large proportion of Russian Jews live on the East Side, south of Fourteenth Street and east of the Bowery; principally in the Seventh, Tenth, Eleventh and Thirteenth Wards. These wards enjoy the evil distinction of being the

<sup>1</sup> *Israel Among the Nations*, p. 150.

most densely populated spots in the United States, and probably on the earth. The Tenth Ward has over 700 persons to the acre, the Thirteenth about 600. They are overcrowded with tenement houses which are known as "double-deckers," "dumb-bell" tenements, a type of abode for human beings which New York has the unenviable reputation of having invented. No other city in the United States has any such houses. Their characteristics, according to the report of the Tenement House Commission, are: (1) Insufficiency of air, light, and ventilation due to narrow courts or air-shafts; undue height, owing to the occupation by the building and adjacent buildings of too great a proportion of land area; (2) overcrowding; (3) danger in case of fire; (4) lack of separate water-closets and washing facilities; (5) foul cellars and courts.

A "double-decker" is usually a building six to seven stories high, about twenty-five feet wide, and built upon a lot of the same width and about 100 feet deep. Each floor is usually divided into four sets of apartments, there being seven rooms on each side. The front apartments generally consist of four rooms each, and the rear of three rooms each, making altogether fourteen rooms upon each floor, only four of which receive direct light and air from the street or from the small yard at the back of the building. Of these four rooms only two are large enough to deserve the name of rooms. The front one is generally about 10 feet 6 inches wide by 11 feet 3 inches long; this is used as a parlor. The next room is a kitchen, generally of the same size as the parlor, which receives its air and light from a window opening into the narrow "air-shaft" or such a supply which may come to it through the door opening into the front room. This room contains a range, a sink, and one or two glass-door closets for dishes. Behind these two rooms are two bed-rooms in the four-room apartments, or only one in the three-room apartments. The name of bed-room is applied to these holes by the landlords who charge rent for them, but in reality they are hardly more than closets, being each about 7 feet wide and 8 feet 6 inches long. When a fair-sized bed is in position, there is hardly left sufficient space for one to pass through the room. These rooms get no air or light whatever save such as comes from the window opening into the air-shaft, and with the exception of the highest stories are generally almost totally dark. Water-closets are provided in the hall-



way, one for two apartments or for two families. The vast majority of these "dumb-bells" contain no bath-rooms, though some of the latest models do contain a bath-tub in each apartment or one for the entire building — for about twenty-five families.

The ventilation in these houses is obtained through the so-called air-shafts, which have been called by some witness before the Tenement House Commission "foul air shafts," "culture tubes on a gigantic scale." Owing to its narrowness and its height, evidently the air-shaft cannot afford light to the rooms, particularly the bed-rooms, but only semi-darkness. The air that it does supply is foul, because it contains the air coming from the windows of the other apartments (there are as many as sixty windows opening in some of these air-shafts). Moreover, the air-shaft is used by some as a convenient receptacle for garbage and all sorts of refuse and indescribable filth thrown out of the windows, and this filth is often allowed to remain rotting at the bottom of the shaft for weeks without being cleaned out. In many houses this air-shaft is also used for the clothes lines, and on washing days the air and light are obstructed by the linens hung on these lines to dry.

It will be observed that the ventilation of the houses in these tenements is reduced to a minimum. But there is an older kind of tenement house in the Jewish quarter of our city which is even inferior to the one just described. These houses have no air-shaft — and consequently no windows at all in the kitchens and bed-rooms — one sink for the supply of water in the hallway on each floor for four apartments, only one water-closet in the yard for all the sixteen to twenty-five families of the building, and have no gas fixtures, and the light at night is obtained from kerosene lamps. These inferior old tenements are inhabited chiefly by the very poor Jews, and almost invariably by the non-Jewish part of the Ghetto population. It is, in fact, remarkable how rarely the Irish, German, Bohemian, Italian and other Gentiles inhabit the new tenements in this district, which are therefore left almost exclusively to the Jews. As we shall see hereafter, this is because the Russian Jew's home is comparatively cleaner than that of his non-Jewish neighbors of the same social and financial status, and he therefore prefers to live in a house having a handy water supply, a water-closet, wash-tubs, a modern range, and the like.

The number of persons to an apartment depends on the size of the family inhabiting it, on the financial and social condition of its members and on their personal habits. The better class live in three or four rooms. Considering that a family of the Ghetto consists on an average of six persons the better class require three or four rooms for every six persons. But the large majority of the East Side Jews are very poor, and cannot afford to pay ten to eighteen dollars rent per month; they therefore resort to lodgers to obtain part of their rent. In the four-room apartments, one bedroom is usually sublet to one or more, frequently to two men or women, and in many houses the front room is also sublet to two or more lodgers for sleeping purposes. The writer on many occasions while calling professionally at night at some of these houses, beheld a condition of affairs like this: A family consisting of husband, wife, and six to eight children whose ages range from less than one to twenty-five years each. The parents occupy the small bedroom, together with two, three or even four of the younger children. In the kitchen, on cots and on the floor, are the older children; in the front room two or more (in rare cases as many as five) lodgers sleep on the lounge, on the floor and on cots, and in the fourth bedroom two lodgers who do not care for the price charged, but who desire to have a "separate room" to themselves.

When we bear in mind that the Ghetto population is the poorest in the city and that the rents charged are the highest, we are not surprised at the condition of affairs just described. It is only surprising that, in spite of such overcrowding, the Jews manage to be the healthiest and longest lived class of the population of New York City.

Of the homes of the poor population of the city, the Jewish home is the cleanest. In the small three-room or four-room apartments, which a poor family inhabits, we find, as a rule, the largest, called the "front room," covered with some oil cloth and rugs; sometimes, perhaps, with carpets; in the very poor houses the bare wooden floor is usually kept clean. The front room in tidy homes is kept closed, and the children are kept out of it the greater part of the day. Such a clean, tidy room for the reception of friends and guests, and for social purposes, is not seen in most of the homes of the other slum population. The second room, as we have seen above, is the kitchen, which is also used as a dining-room at meal time, and as a sitting-room for the

father, mother and children. The entrance to the house is through this kitchen, and outside visitors, beholding the entire family around the stove or table, and some of the children playing on the floor, gain the impression that the home of the Russian Jew is untidy and even filthy. But careful inspection of the contents of the room will show the contrary: The range is sparkling — the Russian Jewish woman takes great pride in the condition of the range. Where the landlord does not provide one, a Jewish woman will spend as much as \$20 for a good range “with much nickel,” and give hours of hard labor in cleaning and polishing it daily. I have actually seen houses with a pitiful scarcity of furniture, but with ranges worth from \$15 to \$20. The sink, which in modern houses is also found in this room, is in the majority of cases kept as clean as in any home of the American family, and much cleaner than by people of other nationalities (for instance, Poles, Bohemians, Italians, etc.) of the same social status. The third, and in four-room apartments also the fourth room, is the bed-room — the contents are, as a rule, a large double-bed, and, if there are small children, a baby carriage or a small children’s bed. The cleanliness of this room depends usually on the readiness of the housekeeper to work and clean it of the vermin that are apt to be found in such dark, unventilated places.

The personal cleanliness of the Russian Jew is far above that of the average slum population. The Russian baths are very numerous in the Jewish quarters, and very much frequented. “I cannot get along without a ‘sweat’ (Russian bath) at least once a week,” many a Jew will tell you. On the days when these Russian baths admit only women, they are also crowded with women and children. During the summer, the public baths on the East River are crowded with Jewish people from daybreak till late in the evening. It is to be regretted that the city does not provide more of these baths. It must also be borne in mind that the religious Jew cuts the nails of his fingers and toes at least once a week, because, according to the rabbinical teaching, dirt under the nails contains “devils” or “evil spirits.” Before each meal he must wash his hands, and repeat this operation immediately after meals, and must then also rinse his mouth; and he must not walk four steps from his bed in the morning without careful ablution of his face and hands. A Jewish woman must visit a bath at least once



a month; the nails of her fingers and toes must be cut off. These religious rites and customs are carefully observed by the older generation who are generally pious; the younger people, though they do not observe these rites religiously, follow some of them. These religious rites are, in the opinion of modern sanitarians, highly conducive to the health and cleanliness of the Jews, and, as a matter of fact, the sanitary condition of the Jew's person and home is not inferior to that of any other race living under similar conditions of poverty, want and overcrowding.

One reason for the impression of uncleanness that the casual observer may obtain is the filthy streets in the New York Ghetto. This is due in great measure to the negligence of the city officials; they permit in the Jewish streets nuisances which would not be tolerated in any other quarter of the city; the street cleaning department clears the Ghetto only after it has cleaned the other streets. The residents have enough to care for the houses, which are overcrowded, and leave the streets to the city. But after all this, I can state, and I am convinced that I will be sustained by all who are justly entitled to an opinion, that even the streets in the New York Jewish quarter are as clean as those inhabited by the poor Italians, Bohemians and other immigrant populations. These other nationalities do very little marketing on the streets. They procure their groceries, dry goods, crockery, etc., in stores or markets. The Jews generally buy most of their goods on the streets from push carts, stands, and the like. The reason for this is, probably, that the habit is very prevalent in Russia and Galicia, and they have brought it over from their old home; besides, the Jew has somewhat of a mercantile nature — when he cannot satisfy this instinct on account of his poverty by opening a store, he will at least sell from a push cart or do some peddling. Streets used as markets cannot be kept very clean.

The food of the Russian Jews is considered to be above reproach. The meat consumed, as is well known, has, before being placed on sale, undergone a thorough inspection as to the health of the animal killed. The meat is therefore more wholesome and more fit for human consumption than that in the average non-Jewish butcher shop. As we shall see hereafter, this has some influence on the liability of the Jew to tuberculosis. Moreover, the meat consumed by the Jew is fresh. Meat more than three



days old is not kosher (ritually clean), and in order that it may be made kosher it must be carefully rinsed in clean water. Religious butchers for this reason do not keep meat for more than a day or two. The same applies to fowls, such as chickens, turkeys, etc. Those sold in Jewish shops are fresh, and come from healthy animals.

Fish is one of the most important articles in the diet of the Jew. Those who do not consume much of it must at least have fish for Friday night and for Saturday, and when fish is scarce a Jewess will pay a high price for at least one or two pounds of it for Sabbath. I am informed that the Jews consume proportionally more fish than any other race in New York.

A very important article in the Jewish diet is herring. In very poor Jewish families, when other food cannot be procured, they can live for days on bread, herring, and tea alone. Potatoes, too, are much in vogue. With the exception of horse-radish, carrots, cabbage, beets, and a few others, the Jews consume very few vegetables, although fruits of all varieties are very freely used.

Another important fact is that the Jews do not eat much — a pound of meat per diem is sufficient for a poor family of a husband, wife and a few children. While this may be partly due to the expense — kosher meat is very expensive — still it is a fact that the well-to-do eat comparatively less than non-Jews. Gluttony is considered a sin among the Russian Jews. This trait has also been retained from Russia, where the multitude of the Jews are very poor, and food, particularly meat, is expensive, because of the special tax levied on kosher meat (*takse*). Jewish women generally differ from the men in this respect. You will quite often meet a woman who likes to eat much and well. This, added to the fact that the Jewish women usually do nothing but housework after marriage, is probably the reason why obesity is more frequently met with among them than among non-Jewish women.

It is well known that alcoholism is very rare among Jews, particularly those from Russia. It is even thought by many that Jews are total abstainers. Though this may be so with a small proportion, many Jews partake more or less of alcohol in its various forms, and those who do not ordinarily drink, usually do so at least on Saturday and holidays for religious purposes (*kiddush*) and on various other occasions. One thing must be conceded — Jews only rarely

drink to intoxication; living in the Jewish quarters of New York for ten years, I have seen a Jewish "drunk" only rarely, although in my practice as a physician, I have repeatedly met with Jewish patients suffering from the effects of chronic alcoholism as cirrhosis of the liver, alcoholic gastritis, etc. One of the reasons why Jews are not seen in an intoxicated condition on the streets is because the Jew generally knows when to stop drinking, and when he is somewhat intoxicated, those near him will at once remove him to his home and will not permit him to behave boisterously on the streets. An officer of the Society Chessed Shel Emeth, which has as one of its objects to give poor people Jewish burial, informed me that among the unclaimed Jewish dead in the New York morgue he has during more than one year's service met with only one case in which alcoholism was stated to be the cause of death, and this among an average of five to six corpses weekly (including children). When we recall the fact that the unclaimed bodies in the morgue almost invariably come from the lowest classes of society, and that at least seventy-five per cent. of the Gentile unclaimed dead in the morgue are directly or indirectly caused by alcoholism, we are the more surprised at the infrequency of alcoholism among the Jews in New York. But still it can positively be stated that the vice is growing in frequency among the Jews in New York City. We occasionally meet a Jewish patient in the alcoholic ward of Bellevue Hospital. In their old home in Russia, the Jews abhor a drunkard; they name him with converts and outcasts. To have a drunkard in the family means difficulty in contracting suitable marriages for the children. The Jew knows that it does not pay to be drunk. Having lived for centuries under the ceaseless ban of abuse and persecution in the European Ghettos, he has found it advantageous to his well-being always to be sober. But here, alcoholism is increasing, particularly among the young generation, who are adapting the habits and customs of life of their gentile neighbors—their virtues as well as their vices.

The Russian Jews are generally inveterate smokers of cigarettes; only few, those who are more or less "Americanized," smoke cigars. The Russian Jews prefer cigarettes with mouth-pieces, such as they were wont to smoke in their old home. Others smoke cigarettes which they roll very dexterously with their fingers from tobacco in

cigarette paper. Pipes are not very common. Another habit of the older people is snuffing pulverized tobacco. Chewing tobacco is unknown among Russian Jews.

Tea is probably consumed by Russian Jews far more than by any other nationality living in New York. We frequently see one who drinks more than a dozen glasses of this beverage daily. In the cafés of the Ghetto one may always observe people sitting for hours and drinking tea. This habit has been acquired in Russia, where excessive tea drinking is common. One advantage of the tea drunk by the Russian Jews over that consumed by the Americans is the fact that the Russians never drink tea that has been boiled; they make of the tea an infusion with boiling water; the amount of tannin retained is thereby reduced to a minimum, and it is consequently less liable to cause indigestion, and only the volatile oil which gives the aroma is extracted.

Considering the fact that the Jews are the most nervous of people, as we shall see hereafter, it is not surprising that they consume much tea. Having their nervous system often fatigued and exhausted from worry, care and anxiety, they require some agreeable stimulant which will remove, at least temporarily, the sense of fatigue, and give a feeling of well-being. Other nations use alcohol for such purposes, but the Jews prefer tea, which in the long run, of course, overstimulates their nervous system, and a depression is the result, which requires larger doses of tea to overcome it. A vicious circle is thereby established, which by no means contributes to the health and well-being of the Russian Jew.

Coffee is used by the Jews in Russia only rarely. Here in the United States it is more frequently consumed, but not so freely as tea. Drug habits, such as the use of opium, chloral, cocaine, etc., are almost unknown among the Russian Jews.

While speaking of the evils of the New York tenement houses, the various Tenement House Commissions were always wont to point out that the mortality in the tenements is considerably higher than that of the private dwellings. They succeeded in obtaining from the vital statistics of the city figures showing that the mortality in some wards was between two and five times higher than that in the wards without, or with few, tenement houses. But on careful analysis it was discovered that the wards which enjoy the lowest mortality of the other wards in New York are most



densely populated spots in the city, overcrowded with tenements, each of which affords a dwelling place for between 200 and 400 human beings.

The wards showing the lowest mortality in Greater New York are those inhabited by the Russian Jews. The wards showing the highest death rates are inhabited chiefly by Italians, Irish, Bohemians, etc., and with none or only few Jews. "In certain blocks in the Italian quarter of the city there is a very high death rate," says the Report of the Tenement House Commission of 1900,<sup>1</sup> "while in certain other blocks only half a mile away, in the Jewish quarter, the death rate is only one-half as great as the average death rate of the city; yet in the latter district there was a greater population, the tenement houses were taller, and the general sanitary conditions were worse."

In fact, when we observe the comparative death rates of the Seventh, Tenth, Eleventh and Thirteenth Wards, which are chiefly inhabited by Jews,<sup>2</sup> we find that during 1899 the death rate per 1,000 population was: In the Seventh Ward 18.16; in the Tenth, 14.23; in the Eleventh, 16.78, and in the Thirteenth, 14.52; for New York City the death rate was, in the same year, 18.53 per 1,000. It will be observed that the Seventh Ward had the highest death rate of the Jewish districts, 18.16, nearly approaching that of the city. But considering that in this ward the non-Jewish, particularly the Irish population, makes up at least 35 per cent. of the total, we must conclude that the mortality of the Jews in this district is also lower than the average of the city.

When we recall that the death rate in New York City was in 1880, 26.40 per 1,000 of population, and that ever since it has been with slight fluctuations, steadily declining, we may find that, possibly, there may be some correspondence between this reduction of mortality in the city and the steady influx of Jewish immigrants. While the activity of the Board of Health towards the lowering of the death rates of the city is evident, still the thousands of Jews with their low mortality may also have contributed somewhat to this effect.

The low mortality of the immigrant Jewish population in New York City was noticed in the report compiled by Dr. John S. Billings, for the Eleventh Census of the United

<sup>1</sup> De Forest & Veiller, *The Tenement House Problem*, Vol. 1, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that over 75 per cent. of the population in these wards are Jews—the Tenth and the Thirteenth almost exclusively, the Eleventh with at least 80 per cent., and the Seventh 65 per cent.



States.<sup>1</sup> According to these statistics the Russian and Polish Jews showed the lowest rates of mortality in New York during the five years ending May 31st, 1890. The highest mortality rate — 43.57, was found to be among the Bohemians; the Italians are next, with 35.29; the Irish, with 32.51, etc., while those whose mothers were born in Russia and Poland enjoyed the lowest mortality rates — only 14.85. The mortality of children was also the lowest among the Russian Jews — only 28.67 per 1,000 population, as against 82.57 among the Bohemians, 76.41 among the Italians, and so on. W. Z. Ripley,<sup>2</sup> in speaking of the longevity of the Jews, aptly illustrates it by the following example: “Suppose two groups of one hundred infants each, one Jewish, one of the average American parentage (Massachusetts), to be born on the same day. In spite of all the disparity of social conditions in favor of the latter, the chances, determined by statistical means, are that one-half of the American will die within forty-seven years; while the first half of the Jews will not succumb to disease or accident before the expiration of seventy-one years. The death rate is but little over one-half of the average American population. This holds good in infancy and in middle age.”

The longevity of the Jews has always appeared paradoxical to those who have investigated the question. As we have seen above, the Jew is by external appearances the least physically developed of the European nations; in stature he is the shortest, the girth of his chest is the narrowest, he is paler and poorer in blood than most of the non-Jewish nations among whom he lives. But his longevity and resistance to disease surpasses those of his apparently stronger neighbor. The cause of this paradox is plain when we consider the Jew's history. The Jewish race has, for the last two thousand years, spread widely over the face of the earth. During all his migrations from continent to continent and from country to country, the Jew was always exposed physically and mentally to the most diversified conditions. The variety of climate, the repeated changes of habits and attempts at acclimatization have wrought great changes in his physical organization. His struggles against adverse circumstances, endeavoring to readjust his organism in adaptation to new conditions, defending himself against his mediæval persecutors who

<sup>1</sup> *Vital Statistics of New York City and Brooklyn*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *The Races of Europe*, p. 383.

mercilessly gloated over his agonies, torturing him with a fiendish glee of hate and intolerance, have left him a physical wreck as far as external appearance is concerned. But on the other hand, these inimical conditions have also had other effects on the Jew's organization. Partly by weeding out, either by death or baptism, all those of the Jews who, by reason of physical, mental and intellectual inferiority, could not withstand the ban of poverty, abuse, and persecution, and partly by keenly sharpening the senses, and by developing the functional activity of the brains of those who were sufficiently brave, stubborn enough to remain Jews in the face of that brutal persecution, natural selection has left behind a race which is at present fully equipped with means to resist poverty, misfortune, and even death more easily than other races who have had no such struggle for their existence. Only those most resistant to the effects of disease, the healthiest who could easily adapt and acclimatize themselves to new external conditions on short notice,— in brief, only the fittest have survived. At one period of their history they had to withstand the effects of contagious diseases, all those predisposed, the weak, sickly and infirm, succumbed, and those left behind were more or less immune. This immunity was transmitted to future generations. At another period of their history, intelligence and intellect were the best weapons for the preservation of the race in the struggle against persecution, and only those who possessed the most intelligence and knowledge and the toughest, the shrewdest, who were best fitted to cope with the adverse circumstances, survived; the weakest, the most stupid and the most ignorant, went to the wall. These qualities were inherited by the succeeding generations. The final result is that the Jews at present are a picked race which can resist pain, misfortune, grief, worry, starvation, disease, and even death better than other civilized races. Those who were shiftless, immoral, lazy, incorrigible, drunkards, could not remain Jews under the mediæval persecutions. Only those who were strong, healthy, and energetic could venture to remain Jews — hence their longevity.

Of the diseases to which Jews are most liable those of the nervous system stand out most prominently. Neurasthenia and hysteria are more frequent among them than among any other race. Some physicians have even gone so far as

to state that the vast majority of the Jews are neurasthenics, and that nearly all the women are hysterical. The observations of the physicians who practice among the Russian Jews in New York sustain these contentions. Hysteria is very frequent among women, and among men is far more often met with in Jews than among any other people.

Insanity is very frequent among the Jews. It appears that it was very frequent among the ancient Hebrews. At present we find, wherever statistics on the subject are available, that the Jews suffer proportionately from two to five times more frequently from mental alienation than non-Jews. Here in New York City we meet with similar conditions. Recent statistics show that the Jews in this city supply a greater number of insane to the asylums than any other race living here.<sup>1</sup> The same can be observed in the asylums for idiotic and feeble-minded children of our city. It is stated on good authority that more than fifty per cent. of the inmates are of Jewish origin. Remembering that the Jews constitute less than twenty per cent. of the total population of Greater New York, we can appreciate the fearful proportion of insanity and idiocy among the Jews.

A disease of which the Jews suffer more than any other nationality is diabetes. Dr. Heinrich Stern<sup>2</sup> examined carefully the mortality from diabetes in New York City during 1899, and found that out of a total of 202 deaths due to this cause, fifty-four, *i. e.*, twenty-five per cent., occurred among the Jews. And as the Jewish population of New York City is scarcely twenty per cent. of the total population, it follows that the Jews suffer about three times more often than others from diabetes.<sup>3</sup> Varicose veins, hemorrhoids, ruptures and some form of diseases of the nervous system are also more frequent among Jews than non-Jews.

The greater liability of the Jews to nervous diseases, particularly neurasthenia, hysteria, and diabetes is to be considered as the outcome of a long series of events in the Jews' history for the last two thousand years. It is a result of the anxiety, prolonged worry, grief, and cerebral overwork of the Jews under the ban of mediæval persecution. These diseases, as we all know, are diseases of great urban centres, and they signify that the organism of their possessor has

<sup>1</sup> See articles "Idiocy" and "Insanity," by the author, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. VI.

<sup>2</sup> *Medical Record*, November 17, 1900.

<sup>3</sup> For a more thorough discussion of the subject, see article "Diabetes," by the author, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. V.



entered on a race of competition for which it is not adequately equipped. The Jew has been for centuries an urban resident. According to Jacobs, four-fifths of the Jewish population live in large towns.<sup>1</sup> The diseases of the city population are therefore accentuated in the body and mind of the Jew. Of non-Jews only one-third of the population are town-dwellers; and the case is consequently different with them. It has been shown by Mr. Cantlie, in his book, "Degeneration Amongst Londoners," that the London poor do not survive beyond three, or at most, four generations; the same has been proved to be the fate of the poor inhabitants of Paris. It is, indeed, rare to find among the poor in modern large cities families which could trace their ancestors back for five or six generations as city dwellers. The population of the cities is kept up by the constant influx of good, pure, fresh blood from the country, which counteracts the deteriorating influences of the busy, enervating city life. Dr. Otto Ammon has conclusively shown that the large majority of the town-dwellers in Baden, Germany, are either themselves immigrants from the country or else the children of immigrants. The same has been shown to be true of nearly all the other cities in Germany — nearly one-half their population is of direct country descent. One-third of the population in London is of country birth; the same is true of Paris. For thirty of the principal cities of Europe, according to Ripley, it has been calculated that only about one-half of their increase is from the loins of their own people, the overwhelming majority being of country birth. The Jews have not had this advantage of draining the pure, fresh, healthy country blood for the rejuvenation of their own, which is deteriorated by town-dwelling, and as a result we find that the evil effects of the strained, nerve-shattering city life have been deeply rooted in their bodies and minds, and this in turn has been transmitted to their offspring. With each new generation the nervous vitality of the Jewish race lessened, and as a final result, we find that most of the diseases that increase with the advance of civilization, particularly the neuroses and psychoses and also diabetes, are relatively more frequent among the Jews than among the non-Jews. "The Jew," says Leroy Beaulieu,<sup>2</sup> "is the most nervous and in so far the most modern of men. He is, by the very nature of

<sup>1</sup> "Anthropology," *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup> *Israel Among the Nations*, p. 169.



his diseases, the forerunner of his contemporaries, preceding them on that perilous path upon which society is urged by the excesses of its intellectual and emotional life, and by the increasing spur of competition. The noisy army of psychopathics and neuropathics is gaining so many recruits among us that it will not take the Christians long to catch up with the Jews in this respect."

Consanguineous marriages, which are very frequent among the Jews, have been assigned as a most potent cause of their nervousness and also of the frequency of diabetes among them. I do not believe that this is a satisfactory explanation. Modern medical science teaches that consanguineous marriages between healthy people, *per se*, do not cause any disease or infirmity in the offspring — excepting those, of course, which are contracted between diseased people.

A very important factor in the production of the nervousness of the Jews is that they are essentially a commercial people — many prefer speculation in business pursuits to manual labor. This can be observed in New York City, where a number of Jewish laborers, after having succeeded in saving a few dollars, begin business on a small scale; they peddle or sell from push-carts, stands and small stores.

Business, particularly that done with lack of funds, involves prolonged morbid emotional excitement, such as worry, vexation, grief, and anxiety; and the importance of these as factors in brain exhaustion cannot be overestimated. The Russian Jew, again, as we have seen, is under-fed, emaciated and anæmic. The disproportion between his mental activity on the one hand, and his lack of physical development on the other, are added to the fact that he comes into this world already handicapped; the nervous vitality of his parents has also been more or less affected by the same causes and an additional very potent cause of nervous exhaustion, persecution, which has strained and shattered them physically and emotionally. All these factors taken together give us more than sufficient reason to expect nervousness among the Russian Jews.

The education of the Russian Jews in their old homes is acquired in the so-called cheder, at an early age. At four or five years a Jewish child attends school, and studies ardently the Hebrew language. Between seven and ten years he studies the Bible, and in instances the Talmud. The Jewish schools in Russia, the chedarim, are anything but

conducive to the healthy functional development of the young children's nervous system and bodily activity.

If we bear in mind further that systematic exercises, such as billiards, golf, tennis, hunting, gymnastics are not in vogue at all among immigrant Jews, we have the picture complete — the restless, overworked and exhausted nervous system gets no recreation, and breaks down under the slightest provocation.

Suicide has been observed to be infrequent among the Jews in Eastern Europe, but in New York City it appears to be growing among them. We have no exact statistics as to its proportion, but the fact is, we hear of Jewish suicides quite often. Here again we see the effects of modern civilization on the Jew.<sup>1</sup>

By immunity is understood the resistance of the tissues of the system to the development of infectious diseases. It has only a relative meaning, because there is no absolute immunity. When we say that a race is immune to a certain disease, as the negro is, for instance, to yellow fever, we do not mean to convey the idea that the negro never suffers from that disease, but that he is affected less frequently than the white races are, or only rarely. Using the term immunity in this sense, I can positively state that the Jews in New York are relatively immune to most of the infectious diseases. I make this statement with the full knowledge that most of those who have not made a special study of the mortality from contagious diseases in New York have always entertained a decidedly contrary opinion. But I think that a careful analysis of the statistics given below, will convince all skeptics as to the truth of the assertion.

As we have seen above, there are four wards in New York City which are chiefly inhabited by Jews — namely the Seventh, Tenth, Eleventh and Thirteenth. At least 75 per cent. of the people living in these wards are Jews. By computing the mortality from infectious diseases in these wards as they are recorded in the annual reports of the Board of Health, we can easily see if the Jews have a lower

<sup>1</sup> It is worthy of notice that the same phenomenon has been observed among the Jews in Western Europe: About fifty years ago it was very rare to meet a Jewish suicide. At present the number of Jews who commit suicide has increased to an alarming extent. Thus the latest statistics for Prussia show that self destruction is more frequent among the Jews than among the Christians; from 1893 to 1897 there occurred among the Christians 31.17 male and 8.02 female suicides per 100,000 population. Among the Jews the proportion was 36.50 male and 11.89 females per 100,000. (Arthur Rupin, *Die Socialen Verhaeltnisse der Juden in Preussen und Deutschland*. Berlin, 1902).

mortality from these diseases. An analysis of these figures shows that diphtheria and croup killed in New York during 1897, 1898 and 1899, 64.20 per 100,000 population, and of Jews in the four wards referred to only 59.55. Scarlet fever and measles appear to have been the exceptions, the former being for the city only 24.17 and for the Jews 34.14 per 100,000, the latter showing 21.69 and 21.15 respectively. In Dr. Billings' report on Vital Statistics of New York City and Brooklyn, published by the Eleventh Census of the United States, there is given the mortality from certain diseases of the various races and nationalities confirming these figures. I have assumed the figures in this report which refer to Russians as applying to Russian Jews, as these are the greater part classified under the nationality in these cities.

Diarrhœal diseases are also less fatal among the Jews. Every year we hear that when philanthropists are clamoring about the great mortality of children from diarrhœal diseases during the summer months, they point to the congested tenement districts inhabited by the Jews as being the stronghold of the scourge. If they had studied the question more closely, they would have ascertained that the Jews in the Seventh, Tenth, Eleventh and Thirteenth Wards have a lower mortality from this disease than any other nationality — the average annual mortality in New York City during 1897, 1898 and 1899 was 125.54 per 100,000 population. Among the Jews in the four wards mentioned only 106.79. For the six years ending May 31st, 1890, the mortality for New York from diarrhœal diseases was 316.85; among the Bohemians, 766.73; Italians, 425.58; United States, white, 398.34, and among the Russian and Polish Jews only 195.55. The same is true of typhoid fever. It is proportionately less frequent in the East than in the West Side of the city.

The mortality from diseases of the nervous system among the Russian Jews of New York during six years ending May 31st, 1890, as given in the Eleventh Census was 117.68, as against 336.76 among the Bohemians, 293.48 white Americans, 242.44 Irish, and so on.<sup>1</sup> This is contrary to the opinion of many demographers who consider the Jews the greatest sufferers from nervous diseases. But if we bear in mind the fact brought out by the author while speaking of the nervousness of the Jews that "only the functional nerv-

<sup>1</sup> Billings, *Vital Statistics of New York City and Brooklyn*, p. 41.



ous diseases, as hysteria and neurasthenia, are more prevalent among the Jews, while the organic degenerative nervous diseases are even less frequently met with among them," we are not surprised at the low mortality from this cause among the Jews of Russia and Poland in New York.

Of the venereal diseases, such as syphilis, the Jews appear to suffer less frequently than other races. Many writers in Russia have recorded statistics to that effect. We have no exact statistics about the prevalence of syphilis and gonorrhea among the Jews in New York, but the testimony of physicians practicing among them shows that while among the Jews syphilis is often met with, it is not so frequently encountered as among non-Jews. Gonorrhea seems at present to be very much on the increase among the Jews in the East Side of New York, which again shows the effects of their sojourn in our metropolis.

The most important disease to which the Jews show a relative immunity is tuberculosis, or, as it is commonly known, consumption. The author of this article has shown this to be a fact among the immigrant Jewish population in New York City in his paper on the "Relative Infrequency of Tuberculosis Among Jews," to which the reader is referred for details.<sup>1</sup> One fact we desire to emphasize here, namely that consumption is very much on the increase among our population on the East Side, particularly among the poorer classes of the Jews living in New York City. Dr. Lee K. Frankel, manager of the United Hebrew Charities, has shown that, while in 1895 the ratio of consumptive applicants for relief was 2 per cent., in 1899 it reached 3 per cent.; *i. e.*, that is, an increase of 50 per cent. in four years, which is appalling. Dr. Frankel also shows that consumption as it exists among the Jews in New York is almost wholly confined to the lower classes, the poorer element of the Jewish population, and that the foreigners who suffer from this disease have contracted it after their arrival in the United States. He bases his deduction on an examination of 10,000 death certificates in the New York City Board of Health, beginning with January 1st, 1900. In 888 of these the cause of death was stated to be tuberculosis; 72 of these were Jews. If we recall the fact that the Jewish population of New York City is estimated to be at least 15 per cent. of the total

<sup>1</sup> *American Medicine*, November 2, 1901. See, also, article "Consumption," *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV.



population, we may from Dr. Frankel's figures, also find that if consumption was as prevalent among the Jews as among the general population, the number of deaths due to this cause should have been 133. As it is, only 72 were recorded, a little over one-half that of the population of the city. We also find from Dr. Frankel's figures that of the 72 Jews who died of consumption, 39 died in tenement houses, 23 in institutions and only 1 in a private house. This tends to show that those Jews who are socially and economically on a higher plane, are even less liable to consumption than the unfortunate poor who are huddled together in congested tenements, in poverty and in want, exposed to infection to the highest degree. It can be positively stated that in case the conditions of over-crowding and misery among the immigrant Jewish population on the East Side shall keep on as they are at present, the Jews living here will in the near future show a yet greater mortality from the "white plague" than the Irish and Italians do at present.

The low mortality of the New York Jews from the contagious diseases is the more remarkable when we bear in mind that everything that is conducive to the spread of infection is at hand in the East Side — poverty, overwork, ill-ventilated sweat-shops, overcrowding in the tenements, lack of fresh air and sunshine — in fact, the New York Ghetto is considered the most densely populated spot on earth. When we remember that, in spite of all these adverse conditions, the Jews show a lower mortality from contagious diseases, we are forced to conclude that they do possess some relative immunity or a greater power of resistance to the noxious effects of contagious diseases.

The causes of this relative immunity of the Jews are to be sought in their past history, their religious customs and habits of life; to their devotion as husbands, as wives, as parents and as children. Although the nervous system of the Jews is more or less shattered as a result of the ceaseless persecution, abuse and oppression they have undergone for centuries, still the organic nervous diseases are infrequent among them — the reason for this is plainly evident — and alcohol and syphilis are also infrequent. We know that any poison that depresses the vitality of the system, as alcoholism and syphilis, predisposes infection by pathogenic micro-organisms. Pneumonia, consumption and many other fatal diseases have alcoholism as a remote

cause of their origin. The Jews, not being addicted to alcoholism, are consequently less frequently affected by these diseases. Another important point is the fact that the prognosis of most of the infectious diseases depends on the patients' antecedents. A mild attack of disease in an alcoholic is more liable to kill than a severe case in a temperate man. The vitality of the offspring also depends very much on the presence or absence of alcoholism and syphilis in the parents. Children begotten of parents suffering from these virulent poisons are easy prey to the infectious diseases. The Jewish children show a lower mortality, because their parents bestow on them a vitality untainted by alcoholism and syphilis, and they can therefore more easily resist the effects of contagious diseases. Jewish parents are also more devoted to their children than others, their anxiety in case of slight illness is greater than that of poor people of other races, and they seek medical assistance far more frequently. Added to this fact, that Jewish women do not after marriage work in factories as frequently as poor women of other nationalities and have more time to attend to their children, and we have all the factors that reduce the mortality, particularly of infants.

The lesser mortality of the Jews from consumption is explained by the above factors, and an additional very important religious rite—the inspection of carcasses in the slaughter-house as to the health of the cattle. The Jew is prohibited from consuming meat coming from diseased cattle, particularly such which have suffered from diseases of the lungs and pleura. We know that a great proportion of the tuberculosis has its origin in the consumption of meat coming from tubercular cattle. In the case of the Jews the chances of infection from this source are reduced to a minimum.

To the cleanliness of the Jewish home from the moral and sanitary point of view we must ascribe most of the health, longevity, and immunities of the Jews. When the Jew assimilates with his non-Jewish neighbors, adopting their modes of life and habits, he gradually loses his immunity and his longevity, and in time does not differ as to health and sanitation from the people among whom he happens to live.

It is agreed that the immigration of sober, healthy, and industrious people to the United States is desirable, and in view of all the facts we have collected, the Russian Jew is

as desirable as any other class of foreigners and better than many. We all know that notwithstanding the fact that the Russian Jew comes from a country where typhus and smallpox are endemic and cholera quite often rages epidemically, he has never brought these diseases with him; even during 1891-1894, when cholera was raging in Russia, the numerous Jewish immigrants did not import the disease to the United States.

The fact that they are not addicted to alcoholism is also one of the most important qualities that make the Russian Jew a desirable immigrant. Those few insanitary habits which he acquired in Russia the Jew does his best to forget after living a longer time in the United States. And as his children attend public school almost invariably, we are convinced that the generation which will succeed the Russian Jews of to-day will prove to be good Americans morally, physically, and intellectually.

## (B) PHILADELPHIA

It is well recognized that housing conditions in Philadelphia are different from those in other large cities, and that whatever the evils, we do not have to contend with the evils of the tenement. However, it will not do for Philadelphians to gloat over the fortunate situation which has enabled so many working-men of the city to live in their own little homes, sometimes under their own "vine and fig-tree," for we, too, have evils which call for remedy; we have allowed congestion among our foreign populations; we have permitted bad housing to grow up; we have failed to make and to enforce regulations which prevent sickness and disease and contagion; and, through negligence, the City of Philadelphia has problems which it should have coped with ere they rose to large dimensions.

A little study of housing conditions in the southeastern section of the city was made in the spring of 1902 under the auspices of the Octavia Hill Association. The writer had the pleasure of taking part in the investigation, the entire results of which were placed at his disposal.

The five wards of the district to which attention was given, the Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Seventh, contain about one-eighth of the population of the city and cover about one-fiftieth of the area. The average density of the most thickly populated ward, the Third, is 209 persons per acre.<sup>1</sup> The average density for the entire city is 14 persons to the acre. It is therefore evident that we are dealing with a congested portion of the city.

I shall take up the figures of the Jewish block, among the three examined in the investigation referred to, the other two being Italian and negro blocks respectively,—so denominated because the greater part of the inhabitants are of the particular class. In the Jewish block, Third to Fourth Street, South to Bainbridge Street, I have noted 75 houses occupied by Jews; 9 on Third Street, 13 on

<sup>1</sup> *Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science*, July, 1902, p. 111.



Fourth Street, 13 on South Street, 23 on Kater Street, 3 on Orianna Street, and 14 on Bainbridge Street. This is, in many respects, a good illustrative block for our purpose, representing as it does several elements, from the economic standpoint. On South Street, there are stores where all sorts of goods may be purchased; it is a regular retail street. Third and Fourth Streets are likewise occupied by shop-keepers. Bainbridge Street contains old clothes and second-hand shops. In the upper stories of these buildings, those portions not occupied by the store-keeper are rented to tenants, whose occupations are tailoring, peddling and the like. The residents of the smaller streets, Orianna and Kater, and the upper floors of the buildings of the main streets are a poorer class than the merchants of South Street and the shop-keepers of Third and Fourth Streets.

Let us take up for examination one of the small streets of the block and ascertain the condition with reference to housing. On Kater Street we have a record of 23 houses with Jewish families. There were among them 9 tailors, 3 peddlers, 1 huckster, 1 shirtmaker, 1 paper-hanger. This is sufficient to give some idea of the economic position of the inhabitants. The average rental per house was \$15.04 per month. This is equal to \$8.06 for each family, as there were 40 families in the 23 houses. There are thus an average of  $1\frac{3}{4}$  families to the house. The total number of persons in these houses was 299 — 197 adults and 102 children (under 14 years of age). This is an average of about 5 to a family, and 8.65 persons to a house. The houses average three stories each, or 5.83 rooms each, there being altogether 134 rooms. The result is that there were 1.48 persons to each room, a condition of crowding not only from a Philadelphia point of view, but from that of congestion generally. It is a larger number than was found in an investigation in three similar districts in Chicago, where the average was 1.28. It must be admitted, however, that a comparison based on the number of persons to a dwelling does not show a bad state of affairs for this population contrasted with the average of the population in some of the large cities. In Philadelphia the number of persons in 1900, according to the Twelfth United States Census, was 5.4. In Baltimore the average number was 5.7, in St. Louis 7, in Boston 8.4, in Chicago 8.8, in Brooklyn 10.2, in the boroughs of Manhattan and Bronx (of Greater New

York) 20.4. But we are justified in making comparison with congested sections, for our purpose.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, to make the comparison absolutely accurate as a basis for sanitary and health conditions we should have to take into consideration the number of cubic feet in the rooms, the surroundings of each, and the like, but it is sufficient here to bring out the fact that a state of crowding exists.

Belonging to the 23 houses on Kater Street there were 22 water closets and 5 privies. This is an average of 1.17 to a house, or .67 to a family, or, to put the fact in another way, 7 adults and children had the use of one water-closet or privy.

The total number of bath-tubs in these 23 houses was 2, of which one is used only in the summer time.

Twelve of the 23 houses had as their sole water accommodation one hydrant each, in the yard. Three additional houses had a total of one hydrant for common use. Two others had one hydrant in common. Thus there is a total of 14 hydrants for 17 houses occupied by 20 families composed of 102 persons, an average of more than 7 persons (adults and children) to one hydrant for washing clothes and persons. The other 20 families had altogether 20 faucets.

These statements show housing conditions in a poor street, merely from the standpoint of the barest and most ordinary health and sanitary accommodation.

When one considers that comfortable houses with good accommodations can be found in other sections of the city at \$15 per month, it is a fair inference that the landlord profits by a condition of affairs which permits bad housing; that, in any event, the tenant does not obtain a good return for his rental as compared with other sections.

Now, taking in the entire block, as regards the 75 houses containing Jewish residents, we find that the total number of persons was 688 — 372 adults and 316 children. These represent 142 families. As there were 496 rooms in these houses, the average number of rooms per house was 6.6. The average number of persons to the room was 1.39, a condition of crowding above that quoted for Chicago.<sup>2</sup> As the total number of families in these 75 houses was 142,

<sup>1</sup> *Tenement Conditions in Chicago*, p. 64. Of the three Chicago districts one is composed of Italian and Jewish residents and the average in this was 1.26 persons per room.

<sup>2</sup> *Tenement Conditions in Chicago*, p. 64.

the average of families to the house was 1.9, and as the total number of persons was 688, the average was 9.17 persons to the house. This is considerably more than the average for the city at large (which is but 5.4 persons to the house). It is also more than the average in the three districts in Philadelphia which were studied. Their average was 7.55. The average for the Italian block was 9.88 and for the negro 5.73. It will be seen that the crowding in the Italian block is the greatest.

In this block in the 75 houses there were 86 water closets and 22 privies, making a total of 108, an average of 1.46 to a house, or 1.31 to a family, that is, 6.4 had the use of one water closet or privy. As to quality, some of these closets and privies are reported as being in bad condition, which may mean not kept cleanly, insufficient flush of water, so arranged as not to allow of the exhalation of gaseous odors, and the like. Though something may in instances be due to the carelessness of tenants, many faults which affect the permanent health of the community are due to the landlords in not providing adequate and approved appliances.

There were in the 75 houses altogether 8 bath tubs, of which 3 were used only in the summer. This is an average of about 86 persons to a tub.

Such a condition, on its face, bespeaks a failure to appreciate the value of the bath. It should be understood, however, that the public bath is often patronized in the absence of a home bath. There are five private bathing establishments down-town conducted by Jews and patronized almost entirely by the Jewish population of this section. They have the ordinary bath and the Russian or sweat-bath — somewhat similar in principle to the Turkish bath. The superintendent of the Public Baths Association at Gaskill Street above Fourth, informs me that about 40 per cent. of the establishment there are Jews. Then, too, the public baths of the city are patronized to a considerable extent.

It appears, therefore, that there is more use of bathing facilities than the absence of bath tubs in the houses indicates. At the same time, it seems that the population needs considerable education in the use of water for the body. The habits of Russia and cold climates, where there was less need for the bath, must be adapted to the at times heated atmosphere of America and to the modern notions of frequent bathing of the body as a measure of health. A



similar absence of baths is found in the houses of other foreign born and of the negroes in this section of the city, but it is regrettable to have to institute the comparison because along other lines the Jew's education and point of view are so far advanced over those of other nationalities.<sup>1</sup>

Somewhat similar results to those above narrated were obtained with reference to a block further south. The study referred to was made by a resident of the College Settlement, Miss Edith Jones. The study embraced Carpenter, Christian, Fourth and Fifth Streets, and the north side of Christian Street between Fourth and Fifth. The investigator noted the following: "One observation as regards nationality needs to be recorded. An Irish family, unless hopelessly untidy, is thoroughly clean, not only inside but outside the house and all its surroundings. . . . On the other hand, the majority of the Jewish homes are clean inside, but stairways, closets, yards, etc., which must be used in common by several families, are scarcely cared for at all. . . . They seem unable to act together or to form any agreement for division of common duties."

In an uptown district an investigation into housing conditions was made in 1904 by Miss Emily W. Dinwiddie for the Octavia Hill Association.<sup>2</sup> I visited a number of the houses with her. The district contained 35 houses on North American Street, 30 on New Market Street, and 8 on Wood Street, making 73 in which the inhabitants were predominantly Jews out of a total of 179 houses investigated. The number of Jewish families in these 73 houses was 100, an average of 1.45 families to a house. The total number of Jewish persons was found to be 606, of which 341 were over fourteen years of age and 265 under that age. The number of rooms occupied by the Jewish families was 3.72, making an average of 1.66 persons to a room. The number per house was 8.36.

The number of water-closets was 32 and of privies 42, making a total of 74 toilets, an average of one to a house, or of one to 8.19 persons each. There were 122 faucets (usually the only one for a house being connected with a hydrant in the yard) an average of 1.67 per house, or 1.22 per family. The number of baths (whose faucets were included in the total) was 5. That is, there was an average of 121 persons to a tub.

<sup>1</sup> See *Tenement Conditions in Chicago*, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> *Housing Conditions in Philadelphia*.



The rentals of the Jewish families may be judged by those for the district generally. Families occupying one house paid \$8.78 monthly, or \$2.32 per room. In houses for more than one family the average was \$5.18 per apartment and \$2.40 per room.

The occupations of the heads of the 100 Jewish families were as follows: Baker 4, blacksmith and iron worker 3, button-maker 1, buttonhole-maker 1, carpenter and cabinet-maker 4, cigar-maker 4, cobbler and shoemaker 4, cooper 1, driver and expressman 4, fruit huckster and fruit-stand dealer 9, glazier 1, hatmaker 3, horse dealer 1, Jewish teacher 2, junk dealer 1, laborer 1, laundryman 2, leather worker 3, masseur 1, nurse 1, operator on clothing 5, optician 1, picture framer 1, polisher 1, presser 3, safemaker 1, salesman 1, shirtmaker 4, shopkeeper 10, tailor 10, ticket collector 1, tin-smith 3, trunkmaker 1, unskilled employee in factory 7.

In the houses referred to we have illustrations largely of poor conditions and ill-kept surroundings. It is doubtless true that in the matter of housing, so far as can be presented by average statistics, no highly flattering results are to be adduced with reference to a number of sections in the down-town portion of the city. The results, to be sure, show standards on the whole not deficient as compared with surrounding populations of foreign immigrants and would in many respects be on a par with American families of the same economic status.

If we now proceed more generally we shall find that among the immigrant Jewish population, with economic strides there have been made vast social strides. A number have moved into what are regarded as more respectable streets, where the surrounding conditions are more attractive, the houses better built and modernized, with advantages of good plumbing, ample water accommodation, well ventilated rooms and the like; and they have been furnished in a becoming manner. So that when one steps into one of these homes of the Russian, Roumanian or Hungarian Jew of better grade and should have any preconceived notions as to dirty, ill-smelling apartments in the "slums," he will be quickly disillusioned, and will find a superior state of affairs. He will see in the family a social attractiveness, an intellectual interest, and an enthusiastic whole-souledness that may at times take him aback, and he may be compelled to admit that the family has even some points of superiority over many of his acquaintances who

do not live in the "slums" and who pretend to be in an "advanced" state of mind. And the description does not necessarily apply to families which have progressed to a fair state of comfort. It has equal application to large numbers of persons of modest income who keep their homes tidily, who live in small streets in small houses, but who nevertheless maintain an appearance superior to that of their neighbors. I know a number of such, but cannot bring out their existence in a statistical statement covering any particular block, for they are in scattered groups.

When, therefore, we cast up the account of the immigrant Jew on the score of cleanliness we must take into consideration these families, for they give tone, dignity and worth to the population, and nowhere can be found an immigrant class which shows the advanced state which these show.

In all my wanderings in the southern section of the city I have rarely seen a drunken Jewish man. My experiences with reference to other nationalities of all sorts, including native Americans, would place the immigrant Jewish population at the head of the list of the non-drunken portion of the community. The temperateness of the Jewish population and of the Russian Jewish population in particular is so patent a fact, even to the ordinary observer, that there is hardly any necessity for dwelling on the subject. But it must be taken into consideration to the credit of this element whenever detractors may bring charges against it, for a people that will preserve itself against the evils of drink is entitled to be regarded as in a most progressive state of civilization and to be counted as in so far a desirable factor in the community. Those who see the evil moral and economic consequences of drunkenness among other portions of the community cannot gainsay this.

Russian tea may be said to be a national beverage. It is quite common to observe this drunk in the homes, the societies, and the cafés of the Russian Jewish population.

There is a very prevalent habit of cigarette smoking. With the college young man the cigarette habit sometimes gives way to that of the pipe. With the prosperous business man the cigarette is likewise replaced by the cigar. But, as a rule, the cigarette may be said to be the prevailing means of inhaling tobacco among the Russian Jewish population. In his hours of relaxation, therefore, we may

think of the Russian Jew with his Russian tea and his cigarette.

Let us now take up the subject of health and disease among this population.

"Slums Free of Disease" was the heading of an account in one of the Philadelphia newspapers in the summer of 1903. The article stated: "The fact that not a single case of smallpox has existed in that section of the city known as the 'slums' during the present spread of the disease and the consequent absence of the vaccinating corps in that locality was thus explained by an official of the Bureau of Health to-day: 'In every foreign country, with the exception of England, compulsory vaccination is in force,' he said. 'Those who might have escaped the vigilance of the physicians or who hail from England are inspected before they are permitted to land in this country, and if they have not been successfully vaccinated they must submit to the operation, or go back.

"Then, again, their children are not allowed to enter the public schools until they have been vaccinated, so you can readily see that the people in the slum district are the best vaccinated in this city.'"

Whether this is the whole explanation or not, I do not know, so far as concerns the various elements of the population, but it will be noted further on that in regard to the Jewish element, there is a special reason in the wide-spread belief in, and practice of, vaccination.

Not only was there comparatively less spread of smallpox in the lower wards of the city, but also diphtheria, scarlet fever and typhoid, of which diseases epidemics raged in portions of the other parts of the city. No deduction can be made in regard to this in behalf of the Jews in the down-town wards of the city, except that they shared with their neighbors the absence of epidemic in these diseases.

I have availed myself of some observations in regard to phases of the subject under discussion, which have been made by two Philadelphia physicians.

The following in regard to diseases among the immigrant Jewish population, with special reference to conditions in Philadelphia, is by Dr. David Riesman, and was presented as a discussion on a paper on "Health Problems of the Jewish Poor," read by Dr. Maurice Fishberg,



of New York, at the Jewish Chautauqua Summer Assembly in Atlantic City, N. J., July, 1903:

The problems that present themselves to those engaged in an effort to ameliorate the condition of the Jewish poor may, from the medical standpoint, be stated as follows: (1) What diseases afflict the Jewish poor? (2) Why do those diseases afflict them? (3) How can these diseases be prevented?

The Jewish poor are, of course, subject to the same maladies as is the general community in which they live. Scarlet fever, diphtheria, measles, influenza, whooping cough, pneumonia and typhoid fever prevail among them, according to season and epidemic influences. With regard to the first two, scarlet fever and diphtheria, the records of the Municipal Hospital of Philadelphia, as my friend, Dr. Jay F. Schamberg, informs me, show the admission of a far larger number of Jewish children than is warranted by the ratio of these to the general population. I was indeed startled to learn that not less than 25 per cent. of the cases of scarlet fever had occurred in children of Russo-Jewish parentage. In the case of diphtheria the figures are lower, but none the less striking. It is highly improbable, however, that the terrible frequency of these two affections in the children of the Jewish poor indicates any racial tendency; it is much more likely to be due to living in crowded quarters, several families usually being huddled together in one house.

Smallpox, it seems, does not so often attack the Jews as it does their Gentile neighbors. Among 2,700 cases of that disease received into the Municipal Hospital within the last two years, there was only one Jewish patient. This remarkable immunity is unquestionably due to the fact that the Jews have an abiding and most laudable faith in the efficacy of vaccination as a preventive of smallpox. An unvaccinated Jewish adult is a great rarity.

The multitude of diseases due to alcoholic excess, also, are rarely met with among the Jewish poor; for intemperance in drink is not common with them. If, however, I might judge from my own limited experience, I should say that there is a growing fondness for alcohol in the Jewish population; and that this may in time need to be combated.

In addition to scarlet fever and diphtheria, there are yet other diseases to which the Jewish poor seem more prone



than their fellow races. With regard to some of these it is not possible to give figures; and the belief in a racial predisposition rests upon impressions rather than upon statistics. Thus, disorders of the blood—anæmia and purpuric (hemorrhagic) conditions—appear to be more prevalent among the Jews. The reason for this is, primarily, the deleterious effects of poverty and overcrowding; and also the insufficient use of green vegetables and wholesome food in general, and probably the early maturing of the sexes.

Diseases of the stomach are extremely common among the Jews, particularly among the Jewish poor—more common than they are in other races of this dyspeptic country. The cause of this is not intemperance in eating, which plays such an important part in producing stomach trouble among the general American population; for the Russian Jews are quantitatively frugal. Hasty eating, however, poor food—or, rather food unsuited to this climate, tea drinking, and perhaps undue indulgence in soda water and kindred beverages,—all these serve to produce gastric disorders. The confinement occasioned by the chief occupations of the Jewish poor is also a factor, as it is a factor in the majority of diseases afflicting them.

Morbid conditions of the blood vessels are likewise more common among them than they should be and than they need be. Arterial diseases, such as hardening of the arteries, occur especially in the men, and are in large measure due to the abuse of tobacco begun early in life. This and other excesses that I need not specify are also responsible for the frequency of palpitation of the heart.

Erysipelas is, I believe, a trifle more common among the Jewish poor than among the Gentiles (though I have no extensive data with which to substantiate the correctness of this view). At the Philadelphia Hospital, among sixty Russian Jews admitted during the two years from July, 1901, to July, 1903, there were six cases of erysipelas, or 10 per cent., a percentage far larger than that in non-Jews, which was only 4.2. (There were, for instance, twice as many cases of erysipelas as of rheumatism among the Jews admitted.)

Dr. Fishberg has most admirably discussed the prevalence of tuberculosis among the Jewish poor; and my friend, Dr. S. Solis-Cohen, did much on a former occasion to bring this important matter before the public. They

have covered the subject so fully that I can add nothing to what they said.

Of the frequency of diabetes, to which the poor Jews are probably not quite so prone as their wealthy co-religionists, I need not speak. We know, at present, too little about the causes of the disease to make preventive measures possible.

The exceeding prevalence of nervous affection among the Jews is recognized as an axiom in medicine. Nearly all writers upon nervous diseases, including insanity and idiocy, refer to the fact and try to find reasons for it. The chief cause, it seems to me, is heredity in the larger sense — a racial predisposition transmitted through generations. For this hereditary taint, the grinding intensity of the struggle for existence to which the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe have for ages been subjected is responsible. I need not describe the deplorable and pitiable conditions in Russia, whence the majority of our poor Jews come. "In all Europe," says Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, "there is no people poorer, none that is compelled to earn its bread under greater difficulties than are nine-tenths of the Russian Jews;" and the noted Zionist, Dr. Mandelstamm, says, with grim humor, that there is no people on which experiments in starvation and in the results of insufficient light and air may be made with more ease than on the Ghetto Jews.

These down-trodden Jews come, therefore, to this country with a high-strung, unstable, nervous system, which the conditions of American life are not likely to improve in the first, or even in the second, generation. Our mode of living is in itself productive of various nervous disorders. Nervous prostration (or, as it is called, neurasthenia) had been discovered in this country by the famous New York physician, Beard, and Dr. S. Weir Mitchell had devised his renowned rest-cure treatment for nervous disease, long before the Russian hegira had begun.

Some authorities, such as Professors Erb and Kraepelin, of Heidelberg, and the late Krafft-Ebing, have maintained that in-breeding is, among the Jews, a factor in producing hereditary weakness of the nervous system; but Dr. Martin Engländer, of Vienna, denies this, holding that from eight to ten millions of people are sufficient to preserve a healthy race. He points to the Americans — a race produced by the very opposite of in-breeding, and yet one among which neurasthenia is widely prevalent. Among the

older stocks of Jews in this country, the Portuguese and the Germans, there has necessarily been some in-breeding, but apparently without harmful effect. The contrary, rather, is the case; the race has been improved physically. This improvement is noticeable in greater stature and in the development of a generally finer type of men and women.

Neurasthenia is most common among the Jews, but hysteria and insanity and idiocy are likewise frequent. The neurasthenic Russian Hebrew is an interesting type, and was aptly compared by Charcot to the Wandering Jew. In an entertaining monograph, Henry Meige, one of Charcot's pupils, traces the legend of the Juif-Errant, and compares it with the actual conditions seen in the migratory, restless Jews of Eastern origin. From the farthest corners of Europe, undismayed by the bitterest hardships imposed by poverty, they find their begging way to La Salpêtrière at Paris. After a few visits to the famous clinic, they vanish as noiselessly as they come, wander back to their far-off home and by singing the praises of the great French specialists, induce others to undertake the wearisome journey.

How can we prevent the spread of nervous affections among the Jews? How can we eradicate the sinister taint? Dr. Fishberg has indicated the direction in which the answer lies. We must improve economic conditions.

There must be less over-crowding, shorter hours of work, and rational recreation. If we cannot keep the Jewish immigrants from settling in the large cities, we must disperse them there. There is a tendency to spontaneous dispersion in Philadelphia. Gradually the Russian Jews are migrating northward and southward from the central Ghetto, but it will take decades before they are sufficiently scattered to make the hygienic and moral surroundings what they should be.

The Jewish poor must be taught that the new climatic conditions require the adopting of another sort of food. They must be instructed in the harmfulness of the abuse of tobacco.

I should also like to see them cultivate the manly sports — baseball, football, rowing, swimming — which do much to develop the body and to imbue the mind with a spirit of self-respecting, fearless manhood.

Tuberculosis, that other great scourge, can best be com-



batted by education, under the ægis, as Dr. Fishberg has properly said, of charitable organizations assisted by medical advisers. Out-door life and participation in the national sports will help to develop the chest, which is decidedly smaller in proportion to height than that of non-Jews. The dissemination of knowledge regarding the communicability and the prevention of tuberculosis that has been undertaken with such good results, first by Dr. Biggs, of the New York Board of Health, and now by the authorities in Philadelphia, Cleveland, and other cities, will do much to lessen the frequency of the dreaded disease. Establishing sanatoria near large cities will also prove of great benefit, as it will render possible an earlier treatment of the disease; and this is essential if a cure is to be effected.

With all his proverbial tenacity of character, the Jew, especially the Eastern Jew, is physically and psychically extremely plastic, and only needs a reasonably favorable environment to develop into a noble specimen of man. His energy, intelligence and integrity will solve many of the perplexing economic problems, and in that way the sanitary and hygienic questions will in part, at least, be answered.

On the subject of consumption, the following is taken from the discussion of Dr. Solomon Solis-Cohen on Dr. Fishberg's paper upon the same occasion as Dr. Riesman's discussion:

The knowledge of how to prevent consumption is neither absent nor new. It is old and thoroughly recognized, but it is not acted upon. Liability to the infection of consumption comes from lack of food, from overwork, from over-anxiety, from lack of fresh air, from lack of sunshine, from lack of cleanliness. The infective agent thrives in dampness, darkness and filth—dies in cleanliness, sunshine and fresh air. You cannot shut people up, six or nine in a room hardly big enough for one, and too damp, dark and dirty for any,—you cannot have them work indoors under factory, tenement and sweatshop conditions, sixteen hours a day for starvation wages, and expect racial resistance to tuberculosis or religious dietary laws to save them. It is an utter impossibility. Some years ago Dr. Riesman and I went over the records of our dispensary service at the Philadelphia Polyclinic to see approximately how large a proportion the number of consumptive Jews bore to the number of consumptives of other social groups



who came to the same clinic. We found that a very large proportion — I think something like 12 per cent. of the poor Russian Jews of Philadelphia who applied to that dispensary, were consumptive; but we also found that the proportion of the consumptives among these poor Jews was less by one-third or more than that among the poor people of other races who came to the same dispensary. In other words, the racial immunity apparently saved some poor Jews, but evidently did not save all. Sweeping conclusions cannot be drawn from the experience of one physician, no matter how great that experience may be; for after all, any one person has but a very limited experience compared with that of the profession at large. Yet in so far as I may draw guarded conclusions from my own experience, it would appear that consumption is largely on the increase among the poor Russian Jews of Philadelphia; that the relative immunity to-day is less than it was at the time Dr. Riesman and I made the investigations referred to, for my Gratz College lecture. I see proportionally more Jewish consumptives than I used to see, and after making all necessary corrections for personal factors, that means that the stress and storm of the struggle for existence are bearing more hardly upon them, that they are more narrowly crowded, more poorly fed, more excessively overworked, in a more deplorable economic condition. This is so, notwithstanding the obvious fact that many among those who have come to Philadelphia from Russia, during the past twenty years, have left the ranks of the poor and comparatively poor, and entered into those of the well-to-do and the comparatively wealthy. The large increase in immigration and the natural increase among those who remain very poor, continue to keep up this disproportion.

## (C) CHICAGO

Among the many injustices of Russian despotism is her cruel discrimination against Karaites, Stundists, Finlanders, and Jews. Crowded as millions of the latter are into the comparatively small southwestern portion of Russia they cannot live under conditions as favorable as they might were they permitted to settle in the interior where space is less valuable than it is on the frontiers.

It is very difficult for one who has not visited the country to get a true conception of the surroundings of the Jew in "White Russia" or "The Pale." Writers like Leo Errera and Harold Frederic have given us interesting literature on this subject, but they have been so touched by the intolerance of Russian Christianity (?) that through their sympathetic minds we can see only the picture of a great Inferno.

The Russian immigrant in America tells a somewhat different tale from theirs. We must, however, remember that his native love of home and the fatherland lends a rosy coloring to all his memories of far-away *Russland*. He really loves his country and hates only the government restrictions against him. He will tell you that the microbe-holding, smell-emitting air-shaft of our modern tenement is unknown in Russia. The tenements are rarely over three stories high, and each is provided with a court-yard where the children may play free from the dangers and temptations of the streets.

American sanitary plumbing is the finest in the world. But about three-quarters of our population are permitted to live in homes unprovided with this new preventive of disease; so we are really in this matter not very far ahead of Russia. Laws for the prevention of contagious diseases in America are more rigid and more carefully enforced than are those of Russia, which may partly account for our smaller child mortality.

The death rate among non-Jews in Russia is larger than that of the Jewish population. This is due, above all, to

the temperance of the Jew, who rarely drinks the intoxicating vodka, and lives according to the Mosaic law. Although orthodox Judaism is not so strong as it was a generation ago, yet as habit is powerful there still exists a strict adherence to the customs of the Mosaic code. Early marriages are still the rule and home life throws its safeguards about the health and life of the individual.

In Chicago there are Russian Jews of every class, from the semi-millionaire to the day laborer, from the oriental-looking Jew whose education is purely Talmudical to the professional man who occupies a prominent position in modern literature or science.

Among the wealthier and the indifferent who do not care to live near the orthodox shops and synagogues we find, of course, all modern appliances for sanitation and health. These now live on the avenues and boulevards where money is the open sesame to comfort and convenience. One would hardly recognize in these people the same human beings who ten or fifteen years before had lived on the West Side in uncomfortable surroundings. No people rise more rapidly than these so soon as they find opportunity.

This paper will deal mainly with the poorer classes,—mechanics, factory “hands,” small manufacturers, shopkeepers, clerks, day laborers, and the like. These are settled in four main districts, viz.: Englewood, Brighton Park, the Northwest Side, and the West Side, in the Ninth Ward and its vicinity. Many have also migrated to suburban towns,—Pullman, Evanston, Kensington, East Chicago, South Chicago and Hegewisch. In Englewood rents are low and housing conditions excellent. Yards, bathrooms, and modern laundries are plentiful. Here we have an example of how the Russian Jewish workingman and his family will live if given the chance. While the moral, financial, and educational status of the people there is about the same as that of the Jews in the Ninth Ward, no one has yet called the Englewood district a Ghetto, nor has anyone so designated the wards where wealthy Jews have chosen to live near their temples, relatives, friends and social or business interests.

The Northwest Side is the home of many of Chicago's most intellectual Russian Jews. There are many artistic homes here even where there is little money, the educated mother and housewife making this possible.

Brighton Park bids fair to become another Englewood for the Jewish artisan and small trader.

The West Side district contains about 30,000 Russian Jews, who pay high rents for the privilege of living in insanitary houses. Fortunately conditions are not so bad there as they seem on first sight. Walking through the streets of the neighborhood one is shocked by the dirt and disorder. But it is the æsthetic and not the moral sense which is outraged. The district is not really a slum. Evidences of education, morality, and intelligence are found in abundance. With the exception of incorrigible boys and petty gamblers, there is no vicious element. Temperance rules supreme. Soda water is sold at the grocery stores at two cents a bottle and at the stands for one cent a glass. This in summer and weak tea in winter are the national drinks of the Russian Jewish populace. No neighborhood in our city, with the exception of Prohibition districts, shows so few saloons to the number of population.

A growing demand for accommodations is causing landlords to build on yard space. Accordingly, little children are compelled to use the streets for play grounds, and there are little children galore. Passing wagons and trolley cars, defective plank pavements, disease breeding garbage boxes, and falling missiles play sad havoc with these innocents who furnish ample material for the nearby clinics and dispensaries.

Boys and girls with faces and frocks besmirched, careworn men and women, disorderly shops, rickety shanties, which bring on pneumonia and rheumatism, all on streets shamefully neglected by the city authorities, make up a scene which must cause us to blush for our much vaunted civilization.

There is the aloofness and indifference of those who could be a powerful help in changing the state of affairs. They should use their influence for the enactment and enforcement of a law prohibiting the renting of apartments which are not provided with proper sanitary appliances.

Our West Side settlement of Russian Jews is essentially a community of homes. The "bunk" system, cheap lodging houses, trashy restaurants, and men's boarding houses are conspicuous by their absence. The free lunch saloon is rare. Single men and women without homes either rent furnished rooms or board with families. Seldom will a family take more than one or two "roomers"



or boarders. The restaurants are high-priced and wholesome. There is no hotel in the whole district. The poorest individual pays a family one dollar a week for lodging and coffee or tea in the morning. A penny roll for breakfast and another for supper make up the morning and evening fare of some of these lodgers. For dinner the kind housewife adds five cents' worth of meat to her pot for the lodger and furnishes the cooking free. Thus much against his habit and personal inclination many a poor student or peddler lives temporarily on one dollar and fifty cents a week. However, the large majority of the inhabitants of the district average about \$3 per person for board alone.

In some few isolated cases a family occupies one room, but usually the poorest have two rooms or more. The majority have three or four.

At the Foster Public School 1,730 children were questioned as to the number of rooms occupied by their parents. The information obtained was as follows:

CHILDREN CLASSED ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF ROOMS OCCUPIED BY THEIR FAMILIES

Having 1 room for each family	22
" 2 rooms " " "	62
" 3 " " " "	195
" 4 " " " "	778
" 5 " " " "	305
" 6 " " " "	215
" 7 " " " "	70
" 8 " " " "	79
" 9 " " " "	1
" 10 " " " "	2
" 14 " " " "	1
Total	1730

The majority of the children in this school are of Russian Jewish parentage.

At the Washburne School 798 were questioned. The result was as follows:

Having 1 room for each family	3
" 2 rooms " " "	31
" 3 " " " "	102
" 4 " " " "	289
" 5 " " " "	159
" 6 " " " "	122
" 7 " " " "	47
" 8 " " " "	45
Total	798

The Washburne is attended almost entirely by children of Russian Jews.<sup>1</sup>

In the majority of West Side homes among these people the kitchen is the only room that is suitably heated for bathing purposes. It is also used for the family sitting and dining room. The statement has often been made that soap and water are cheap, but what of the warm private bath-room? Here there are thousands of people compelled to live under conditions, that, to say the least, make the bath at home exceedingly difficult. Often the tired workingman or workingwoman and the growing boy or girl must wait until after midnight before the only comfortable room in the flat is vacated. A real estate agent, who has been fifteen years in the Ninth Ward, says that in the district east of Halsted Street there is not one apartment in four hundred furnished with a bathroom or hot water connections. In the district bounded by Halsted, Canal, West Twelfth, and West Fourteenth Streets, the distinctively Jewish section, but 373 out of a population of 10,452, or 2.56 per cent., have bath tubs.<sup>2</sup> Many families are moving west of Halsted Street in the search for apartments with bath rooms.

There are some wealthy residents who occupy the few modern steam-heated flats which are in great demand. There is one model apartment house at the corner of Bunker and Desplaines Streets, but of its twenty-four families only four are Jewish. These flats are heated by steam and have sanitary plumbing and bath rooms. All the rooms are light and well ventilated. There are porches, flower boxes, paved court-yards, and fire escapes. The rents are from thirteen to sixteen dollars a month for a flat of four or five rooms. The building is under the management of an able social settlement worker, who herself lives in one of the flats. She says that after deducting from the profits a sufficient amount to pay for the natural depreciation in its value the house pays five per cent. on the investment.

Such buildings, with good sanitary arrangements, and with humane and intelligent agents on the premises, would mean the saving of life and health to hundreds of men and

<sup>1</sup> These statistics were gathered through the courtesy of Miss Flowers of the Washburne School and the Misses Schgoldager and Bernstein of the Foster School.

<sup>2</sup> *Tenement Conditions in Chicago*, p. 108.

women in our crowded city districts. In our West Side community of Jews such tenements would help to lift the lives of the young from discomfort and despair to happiness and hope. It must be admitted, however, that agents would sometimes be necessary to combat the slovenly housewife; not all the defects are due to the landlord.

At present the Ninth Ward is covered with small frame and brick buildings originally intended for one or two families, but now subdivided into four or five apartments which rent for from \$2 to \$3 a month per room.

A few enterprising landlords have already put up insanitary tenements with dark, disease-breeding bed-rooms. The time seems very near at hand when Chicago is to develop the tenement-house horror as it exists in New York City. Shall we not take warning now and prevent it? Mere laws on the statute books, we have found by experience, do not wholly protect the poor from municipal evils. The workingman is often too busy earning a living to be able to protect his interests. The leisure class should exercise eternal vigilance for the proper housing of the poor. Behind the laws are needed interested individuals constantly watching in reference to their enforcement.

Ninth Ward plumbing and closets are unhygienic. Rarely is there a house fitted with screens. Thus, flies carry disease germs from house to house. There are no laundry rooms. Chimneys are defective. The rooms are cold and smoky during our long winters and close in summer. Frequently dead rats lie rotting beneath the flooring in these old shanties. Pavements are broken and steps are rickety. Ventilation without the admission of draughts is almost impossible. Yet who cares? The poor tenant cannot be forever quarreling with his landlord, who will tell him to move on if he does not like conditions. There are people who could alter these things if they would. Some have suggested moving the Jewish people from the Ninth Ward to other places. This would still leave the same vile buildings to be inhabited by other human beings. The erection of model dwellings and shops, with the abolition of the street stand, would remedy many of the evils.

That the Russian Jew does not belong to the life he is compelled to live in the Ninth Ward is proven by the general discontent among the residents, who live there only because of strong business or social ties which make it seem to them necessary. Many regret this necessity, but

like the majority of humanity are ruled by circumstance.

This neighborhood supports six or more large private bathing establishments, which charge from fifteen cents to twenty-five cents each for baths. Besides, the barber shops do a thriving business by furnishing baths for the younger men and boys. The women and older men patronize the Russian bathing establishments. They are too expensive for the children and are rarely used by the younger unmarried women whose income is frequently not more than \$4 per week. There are many classes of poor in a great city. Each has its virtue. One virtue of the poorest Russian Jewish family is that the bath house is patronized by them. Another is that their standards of living are not low, as is amply proven so far as house rents go, by the statistics in the report of the City Homes Association, "Tenement Conditions in Chicago."

If they are not better cared for, others as well as they are responsible. It is criminal to permit the renting to human beings of apartments which are not better fitted for that purpose than are dog kennels. The health of a whole city is endangered by insanitary conditions in any of its parts. For our own protection we should insist on good housing throughout the city.

You ask if the Russian Jew is discontented with his surroundings in the Ninth Ward why does he not move to where rents are lower and houses better? It is because of his peculiar observances. He does not ride on the Sabbath day. Consequently he wants to live within walking distance of his orthodox synagogue. He desires to eat food which can be obtained only at the kosher (ceremonially clean) shops. Consequently he wishes to live near these shops. Often he can speak only the Yiddish language. Then, too, in many cases he can best earn his living among his own people. Sometimes his work or business is within walking distance and he wants to save care fares. He has, too, family ties and social interests. Even if streets are neglected and houses are vile, he endeavors to adapt himself to his environment. Who is to blame? He is, in so far as he does not take action to compel landlords and city authorities to furnish sanitary necessities and clean streets. We all are, in so far as we heap cold "charity" on the community and do not co-operate with its members to secure justice. These people give us untainted, splendid material for the future American citizen. They toil



in factory and store to supply our needs, to give our children wealth and comfort. We owe them, at least, health-preserving habitations; else our civilization is no civilization and our social ethics are worthless.

A syndicate of the philanthropic could build model dwellings, shops and market houses. These could be rented at reasonable rates to bring a small profit. The sharp landlord would be driven out of business by such an organization. He could no longer thrive at the expense of human life and health. Such a philanthropic corporation would have large profits in the joy of having saved families from disease and disgrace. The æsthetic sense of the tenant would be stimulated by making order and cleanliness possible and easy. Prizes offered in the schools, synagogues, and chedarim (Hebrew schools) for well kept homes and shops might wholly change the character of the ward. Much municipal carelessness would be checked by a powerful association working in co-operation with the tenants of insanitary neighborhoods. At present greedy landlords club together to pay lawyers to prevent even much needed street paving, thus leaving catch holes and culture beds for all sorts of disease germs on our wooden pavements.

Those who think they will scatter the Russian Jewish people over other parts of the city, when every law of nature, circumstance and religion causes them to segregate as they do on the West Side, are much mistaken. What they may hope to do is to change the character of the so-called Ghetto. For the last thirty years thinkers and philanthropists here in Chicago have tried to help the Jewish poor. They are learning that to know and truly help a people one must live with them, love them, and extend to them not only charity but friendship, sincere, earnest, and on a plane of equality. Men here have talked and talked of the "poor Russian." The "poor Russian" who knows that he is a strong, great-hearted Russian in all but money has both laughed and wept as he has listened to these discussions. You have not heard his answer because he has not always had the command of your language. Read his Yiddish newspapers. You will find his answer in them. He has for generations been a student and thinker. He is rapidly learning our language. He will work out his own salvation in time, even though left severely alone. The philanthropist may hasten that time

by judicious assistance, or defer it by "charity" which weakens and pauperizes. Those who are ashamed of an American Ghetto — and well they may be — have now the opportunity of working for better conditions in the homes of their less fortunate co-religionists and of showing the world by example that "the fittest place for man to live is where he lives for man." There are wise, powerful, and cultured Jews in Chicago. They belong to the Ninth Ward as much as to any other and should go there frequently for its improvement.

When we consider the individual habits of these people we must admit that all is not as we would wish. The Russian Jewish housewife, although a good cook, is a poor laundress. She is often not methodical or neat. She is intensely sociable and will frequently be found visiting her neighbors when she should be cleaning her sinks or arranging her closets. She will wear soiled aprons, and have many useless dust-holding gewgaws in her home and is careless of her personal appearance. Her husband often, in the words of George Eliot, "matches her." They are both greatly overburdened by work and care. They will sit down to brood over their troubles in the new country and thus sap the energy and ambition which should be used for the betterment of their home surroundings.

Fortunately, they have many religious holidays. The advent of these and of the Sabbath rouses them from their lethargy. There is a general cleaning of the houses. Children are bathed in preparation for the holidays and the Sabbath. Men and women flock to the bath-houses. Special meals are prepared. Tired brains and bodies are given a much needed rest. The Passover in the spring is the occasion for a complete housecleaning and for removing every crumb of leavened bread. With the bread crumbs many a heap of dust and microbes is also removed.

A large number of the younger generation have departed from the ways of their ancestors in the matter of religion. So long as they are single, and when away from home, they eat without scruple foods prepared in other than Orthodox Jewish ways. When, however, they marry and have homes of their own, the wishes of parents, other relatives, or friends are respected and a new orthodox

home is established. Besides, their tastes are for customary Jewish foods.

The minimum for which a family of six can ordinarily have its table supplied is about a dollar a day. Half the food is bought at the Jewish shops. The women are expert fish buyers. They will accept none but the freshest. Orthodox Jews will buy only live fowl or those newly killed by their own experts, who sever the blood vessels of the throat and drain the animal of its blood. The blood is still further removed from all meat by soaking and salting. After killing the animal the *schochet* (slaughterer) looks over it for any diseased or abnormal condition, which if found makes it immediately unfit for food and causes its rejection. No Jewish butcher of repute among the people will sell meat which is over six days old.

As their religion enjoins waiting six hours between the meat and the milk meal, and as the Jewish housewife has an entirely separate set of dishes for the meat meal—which is prepared with much care—she becomes a splendid ally of the physician in the treatment of rheumatism and similar diseases. Few of the orthodox families have more than one meal a day at which meat is served.

The Jew is supposed to search the carcass of any animal used as food, to ascertain whether it is diseased. This, unfortunately, is not done according to our modern knowledge of infectious diseases, so that the ritual search of the *schochetim* (slaughterers) who are employed by the great stockyard packers here amounts to almost nothing as a preventive of any disease other than tuberculosis. The very careful examination of the lungs results in discarding the tubercular animals.

The orthodox housewife is compelled to be minutely careful in the selection of food. As the maggot is forbidden food, she will not buy factory cheese. She carefully picks cherries, prunes and other fruits. Cereals are tested on a warm tin plate in the search for maggots. Cabbage is carefully picked for insects. Foul vegetables cannot be used.

The wine cup is in universal use for ceremonial purposes on all holidays and on each Sabbath. The wine and brandy bottle have their place in every home. There is no Jewish temperance organization, yet where can one find less drunkenness and fewer saloons than in the West Side settlement of Russian Jews?

Tobacco is everywhere in evidence. So are the tobacco throat and nervousness. The cigarette and pipe are the boon companions of young men and old. But the woman cigarette smoker finds no place among the Russian Jews. The orthodox never smoke on the Sabbath; at every step their religion fosters self-control.

To the credit of those great educational factors among Russian Jewish Americans, the penny Yiddish and English newspapers, it must be said that modern ideas of sanitation and health are being widely disseminated. It is, however, doubtful whether the newer laws will be so strictly adhered to as those that have the adamantine binding of religion.

It is worthy of passing notice that the Russian Jew seldom has the Roman nose. There seems to be a decided difference, too, in the features of the younger immigrants as compared with the older.

Placing side by side the statistics of two of our Chicago hospitals, one markedly non-Jewish in the nationality of its patients, the other in which no less than 75 per cent. of the patients are Russian Jews, we find in about 1,000 cases in each the following ratios:

JEWISH HOSPITAL		NON-JEWISH HOSPITAL	
Pneumonia	41		24
Rheumatism	47		20
Hernias	56		29
Neurasthenia	39		17
Diabetes	5		3
Delirium tremens	1		36
Morphinism	1		5
Syphilis	4		18

These statistics are meagre, roughly compiled, and somewhat inaccurate, but they will illustrate what physicians coming much in contact with Russian Jews constantly notice, namely, that they are especially prone to rheumatism, neurasthenia, hernias, and pneumonia.

Dr. A. W. Schram, of Chicago, during his residence as interne at the Michael Reese Hospital, told the writer that in his opinion the many hernias were due to a weak muscularity.

Rheumatism and pneumonia are undoubtedly brought on by a lowered resistance due to exposure in our severe climate.

The neurasthenia and hernias may be attributed to the



fact that the people are descendants of students and themselves frequently follow sedentary occupations.

As the two hospitals above referred to do not admit patients suffering from tuberculosis, no statistics relative to this disease could be obtained from those sources. Dr. Maurice Fishberg<sup>1</sup> places the death rate from tuberculosis among Jews at only 110.56 to 100,000 of population as against 565.06 per 100,000 of other residents of New York City.

Statistics of tuberculosis among the living are unreliable because frequently patients that are declared tubercular show in course of time no development of the disease. Though many leave their homes in search of health, the majority of the really consumptive go home to die, so that the death rate may be considered a fair basis.

Tuberculosis is much too prevalent among Jews in Chicago but not more than among other people; probably less. Unquestionably there is less consumption in the Ninth Ward than in other wards where equally criminal housing conditions prevail.

Carcinoma is comparatively frequent. Syphilis is rarely seen in its worst forms, and the ulcerated sore throat almost never. General paresis and locomotor ataxia are also very rare among orthodox Jews. That circumcision is not a preventive of specific disease is proven by Chicago clinics and dispensaries.

Osler<sup>2</sup> states that the Jew is especially prone to diabetes. English physicians point out that the Jew furnishes a large proportionate quota of the insane. The enemy of the Jew has been quick to attribute his nervous diathesis to greed for gain, and to consanguineous marriages, and diabetes to overfeeding. Has it ever occurred to those who make such statements that the Jew comes of a studious ancestry, that his weak muscular system and high nervous temperament are caused by student habits and religious zeal? The Jew is by custom and religion the most temperate man in the world. Diabetes is now believed by many to be a disease of the nervous system. Have the critics ever endeavored to ascertain how many of their insane Jewish patients show a history of consanguineous marriages? There are, unfortunately, many of

<sup>1</sup> "The Comparative Infrequency of Tuberculosis among Jews." *American Medicine*, November 2nd, 1901.

<sup>2</sup> *Practice of Medicine*, p. 320.

our Russian co-religionists in "the living death" at the institutions for the insane of Illinois at Elgin, Watertown, Kankakee, and Dunning. In the few cases which I have been able to investigate I have not found one with a history of the marriage of near relatives. It is to be hoped that some neurologist will give us ample statistics on this subject.

Among a learned people, where one rarely finds an illiterate man, where the field for gaining a livelihood has been narrowed down by the oppressor, and where religious enthusiasm is at its height, we need not look further for causes of the high-strung nervous system and relaxed muscularity of the Russian Jew.

Venereal disease is less frequent than among many other classes. Early marriages prevent in a measure that promiscuous association which so often causes infection. Home life and purity are encouraged. It is considered an act of charity to help an orphan or friendless girl to marry. Frequently collections of money are made to start a young couple in life. The professional matchmaker facilitates matrimony among all classes.

The religious marital bath is largely patronized by the women. This institution was created by men, who were the law-makers. They forgot to make like laws for themselves. Let us hope that they thought their superior intelligence did not need the the whip of religion, and that they were as cleanly as they commanded their wives to be. Assuredly the religious bath is a wise institution for the ignorant. Specific disease is not absent but is rare even among the lowest class of orthodox Jews.

During the year 1900 the Ninth Ward (formerly the Seventh) had a remarkably low death rate in spite of its unfortunate environments. To every 1,000 of population the proportion was 11.99. For comparison, the following figures as to death rates are quoted:

To every 1,000 of population, 1900: Philadelphia, 19.38; New York City, 19.59; Chicago, 14.68; Twenty-third Ward, Chicago, 18.69; Twenty-ninth Ward, Chicago, 15.62; Ninth Ward, formerly the Seventh, Chicago, 11.99.

The Twenty-third and Twenty-ninth Wards have about the same number of inhabitants as the Ninth and similar poor housing conditions. The annual death rate for several years for these three wards is appended:

YEAR	SEVENTH (NOW NINTH WARD)	TWENTY-THIRD WARD	TWENTY-NINTH WARD
1891	16.80	19.74	19.38
1892	14.18	17.22	16.43
1893	11.92	13.38	16.86
1894	12.34	11.32	14.27
1895	14.01	14.71	14.81
1896	12.96	12.27	15.57
1897	12.34	13.09	13.10
1898	13.37	14.81	14.37

These figures, taken from Chicago's public health reports, show a constant low death rate for eight years in the Russian Jewish settlement.

Some writers have claimed for circumcision that it will prevent zymotic disease. The practice is universal among Russian Jews, yet statistics covering fifteen years for what was formerly the Seventh Ward indicate as large a ratio of deaths from this class of cases, as compared with the total number of deaths, as in any ward in Chicago. The experience of physicians here is that typhoid fever, scarlet fever, croup, diphtheria, smallpox, diarrheal diseases are not especially respecters of the persons of the orthodox. A writer in an American medical journal<sup>1</sup> recently complained of permitting ritual circumcision by any but regularly qualified physicians. We should reinforce his efforts in behalf of the Jewish infant. Much mischief is done by mohelim who are not competent surgeons. A thorough knowledge of asepsis, hæmostasis, and stimulation are necessary for the work. It should at least be done under the supervision of a physician, and only with his permission.

It is the custom in orthodox homes to bury the dead within twenty-four hours after death, and with but little exposure. The body is not allowed to remain on the family bedding but is removed to the cold, bare floor. The custom is crude and primitive, yet the early removal of the dead from among the living is best where disease may cause infection. The washers of the dead are not paid. They do the work as an act of charity for rich and poor alike. Flowers are forbidden. Simplicity is the rule. Every visitor to the house of the dead is enjoined to wash his hands before returning home. Doctors who know the customs of the people often advise the washers to use an

<sup>1</sup> Ferd. C. Valentine, M. D., "Surgical Circumcision," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, March 16, 1901.

antiseptic solution for their hands after they have performed their service. This should be made compulsory.

An insurance agent whose patronage is largely among Russian Jews states that they are considered excellent risks by all life insurance companies. I have been unable to procure figures as to the average life of the Russian Jew, but for the Jew in general the expectation of life is greater than that of the people among whom he lives.<sup>1</sup>

The Russian Jew is accustomed to self control. He loves his family. He is very rarely guilty of murder. His wife and daughter are chaste and moral, statements to the contrary notwithstanding. Sifted down we find such statements based largely on hearsay evidence or on exceptional cases of moral depravity. Those who know the people well and can judge them without prejudice realize that there is no class who have so little vice among them. Who better than the physician has the opportunity of knowing the birth of illegitimate children? To a population of over 20,000 West Side Jews there are probably not over ten illegitimate births a year. The mothers are usually young, almost children, and the fathers not always Jews. The calculation was made after careful inquiry among physicians who have a large West Side practice.

The low dance hall does not exist as we see it in some other wards of large cities. The young people do attend dances, but in the same way as the sons and daughters of the wealthy go to South Side club "receptions" and "parties," namely, for innocent amusement and for sociability.

The working girl on the West Side indulges in wine more rarely than does her wealthier sister. Her mother does not play poker and whist. If fashionable clubs were raided as much as poor saloons the gambling passion would be found in the former just as much as in the latter.

The small boy is the small boy here as elsewhere. He needs careful guarding and guiding. When the home is healthful and wholesome and the mother intelligent he may be under her watchful eye. When homes are cubbyholes and mothers incompetent, he seeks diversion elsewhere.

Russian Jewish women have been instructed by their religion to care for their persons, pots and pans. Education must be added to cultivate the sense of the æsthetic.

<sup>1</sup> See article "Expectation of Life," *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. V.



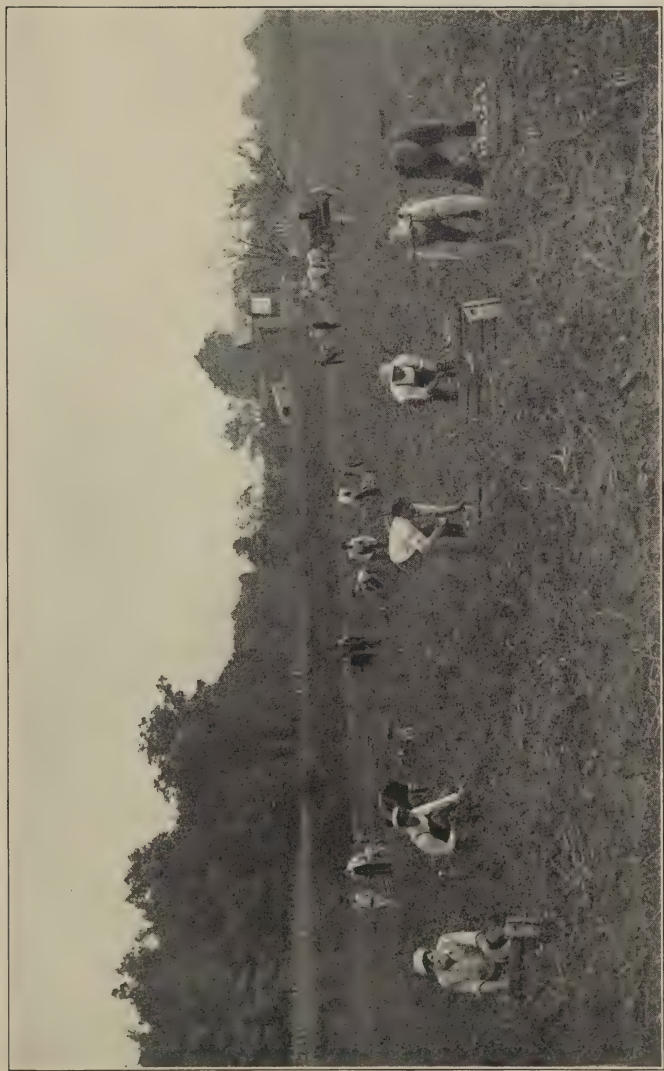
We have in these people an illustration resulting from the notion that it is the woman's business on earth only to bear children. To care for the home and to train the children requires as cultivated a mind as does any noble profession. This the parents of the Russian girl have not always realized. These women have only their intuitive sense of goodness and their religious instruction to guide them. Sometimes they are stubborn and will not allow the daughter to inaugurate her better way in the home. Often there is a pitiful breach between parents and children owing to differences in tastes and ideas.

Some of the Russian Jewish people are so poor that they permit their women to be used for teaching purposes during childbirth. This saves for them the obstetrician's fee. Chicago medical colleges draw their obstetrical instruction largely from Jewish mothers. From one to four students usually witness the birth at the home of the woman. Colleges vie with each other to get these obstetrical "cases."

There are some who see the faults of the Russian Jew through a magnifying glass and hasten to proclaim them from the house tops. They do not seek to find his virtues and are surprised when these are pointed out. Very often his critics have never associated with a single Russian Jewish family on terms of equality. Their ideas are gathered from mendicants whom they meet in connection with the charity societies. Many of these critics know nothing of the Russian Jews as a whole. They see them through a charity office, which is a clearing house for the poverty stricken, the unfortunate, or the degraded. To judge a whole people in this way is like judging the ocean by the foam on its waves.

There is a tendency now among Russian Jews to take up agricultural pursuits. An agitation is afoot to build a gymnasium and to establish an employment bureau in connection with the proposed Hebrew institute. All this will help toward other occupations than in shops and factories. The Russian Jew has awakened to the necessity of self help and co-operation. As he progresses he will be on a par physically and financially where he already is mentally and morally. The necessity in reference to Russian Jews in America is to help them to help themselves. They have intelligence. With the acquisition of other qualities they will take an important place in the community.





GATHERING TOMATOES

*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, Doylestown, Pa.*



JEWISH GIRLS AT WORK IN CANNING FACTORY  
*Agricultural Settlement at Norma, N. J.*



X

LAW AND LITIGATION

# LAW AND LITIGATION

## (4) NEW YORK<sup>1</sup>

### 1

The student of the comparative criminology of the city of New York is confronted at the outset, by the difficulty which arises from the lack of unity in the systems of classification of nationalities, adopted by the various agencies whose reports furnish him with his material. The Bureau of Municipal Statistics would perform a signal service in securing the adoption of a common system, and the value of a vast amount of matter would be increased a thousand-fold. The classification is too summary, in the otherwise valuable reports of the Board of City Magistrates, and the same may be said of the reports of the Board of Health. While the following study is based partly upon estimates, the results are, it will be seen, in general confirmed by comparisons of actual counts. The estimates of population are calculated from the police census of 1895, which places that of the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx for that year, at 1,851,060.<sup>2</sup> The population of the two boroughs for 1898, the year chosen for this investigation, was, according to the estimate of the Board of Health, 1,976,600. Besides the authorities named, recourse has been had to the report of the Commissioner of Immigration for 1900, and valuable suggestion has been derived from an interesting series of papers published by Judge Deuel, president of the Board of City Magistrates, in *Town Topics*,<sup>3</sup> and from his report for the year 1898. Judge Deuel reaches the comforting conclusion that, upon the whole, serious crime in New York city is on the decrease. His tables show the same large relative proportion of crim-

<sup>1</sup> The study by Mr. Andrews was originally published in the Year Book of the University Settlement Society of New York, 1900.

<sup>2</sup> See *Report of the Board of Health*, 1895.

<sup>3</sup> The papers were published at intervals in *Town Topics* during the years 1897 and 1898, and were summarized in two articles, which appeared during the months of September and November, 1898.

inality among the natives of the United States as is shown in the table given below, and the proportionate contributions of the various nationalities are constant enough, within certain limits, to justify us in taking the records of a given year as a term of comparison. The basis for the study is the record of persons actually held for trial or summarily tried, by the police magistrates. It is only of these that the details as to nationality are given, and, moreover, they furnish better evidence of presumptive criminality than do the mere arraignments.

The lower East Side of New York lies mostly within the jurisdiction of Essex Market police court, which extends over a region bounded by East River, Catharine Street, the Bowery, East Houston Street, Clinton Street, Avenue B, and Fourteenth Street. An estimate of its population for 1898 places it at 351,800, or 17.85 per cent. of the total population for the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx. In 1897 the births, where both parents or the mother only were natives, constituted but 14.80 per cent. of the whole number in the district; while those in which the mother only or both parents are given as Polish-Russians, were 40.35 per cent. of the total number. Besides this, both parents or the mother only in 30.07 per cent. of the total births were classed as "from other countries," and these include large numbers of Austrians (Poles, Hungarians), and some Roumanians. The German births contribute 5.90 per cent., the Italian 6.33 per cent., and the Irish but 2.55 per cent., the mother, at least, belonging to the country named. These figures are adduced to give statistical support to what is a matter of common knowledge; namely, that a study of the lower East Side of New York in any aspect, is a study of the population which constitutes the recent and present immigration from Eastern Europe to this country, an immigration consisting mostly of Jews, one of the most important displacements of sections of the race known in history, and one which has resulted in making of New York perhaps the most populous Jewish city that has ever existed. The tables given below are intended to show, first: the general relations of the lower East Side to its chief lower criminal court, Essex Market court (the Third District), by a comparison of the total number of persons held for trial, or summarily tried and convicted in this court for certain specified offenses, with the whole number so held or so

tried and convicted, in the two boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx; second, the proportion of the criminality in the district which may be attributed to the Russians, they being the only nationality of those named above which receives a place by itself in the classification adopted by the Board of City Magistrates. As it is eminently true of a district which includes the Bowery within its limits, that a certain proportion of the crimes and offenses committed there are committed by non-residents, further tables are given, showing the proportionate contributions of the Russians, as well as those of natives of the United States and of each of several nationalities for the two boroughs, both in the matter of total criminality as compared with population, and in the matter of the commission of the same crimes and offenses specified in the previous table. If we leave aside the figures of population, and consider the proportionate contribution of a given nationality to the sum total of criminality as its norm of social activity in this direction, we will have a term which will permit us to discover in what direction the given nationality is disposed to sin most. And in this comparison we will have the advantage of relying entirely upon records, and not at all upon estimates. Following Judge Deuel's scheme in general, but not in detail, the crimes the commission of which involves the implication of moral turpitude head the list. Then follow less serious offenses—the assaults which are mere quarrels, the larcenies which may be mere detentions of goods. Next are placed three offenses—the keeping of a disorderly house, gambling and the keeping of a gambling house—in which convictions, and even the arraignments are so few as to suggest that, apart from the difficulty of securing evidence, they are regarded with a certain degree of benignity by the police.<sup>1</sup> In this group, and in the last, where convictions are numerically very few, percentages would be misleading and the actual number of cases is given.

Table I. showing (1) The total number of persons held or summarily tried and convicted for certain specified offenses in the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx for the year 1898, as shown by the report of the Board of Police Magistrates for that year. (2) The proportionate con-

<sup>1</sup> This is truer of the period under consideration than it is now.



tribution, according to nationalities, in the two boroughs (3) The proportionate contribution of the population within the jurisdiction of Essex Market police court, and the share of the Russians in the criminality of the district.

	Total number held or summarily tried and convicted in boroughs of Manhattan and Bronx	Per cent. U. S.	Per cent. Ireland	Per cent. Germany	Per cent. Italy	Per cent. Russia	Per cent. Greece	Per cent. Other Countries.	Per cent. Essex Market to Total	Per cent. Russians in Essex Market Court to total in same court
Assault (felony)...	531	44.2	14.3	7.1	18.6	4.3	2.6	4.3	10.5	23.1
Burglary .....	769	65.4	9.9	10.1	3.6	5.9	0.5	3.1	23.5	20.2
Forgery .....	53	53.6	6.9	8.7	3.4	10.3	.....	3.4	13.8	62.5
Homicide .....	84	42.8	21.4	11.9	6.0	6.0	.....	10.7	47.6	12.5
Larceny (felony)...	1,590	55.6	8.3	10.0	4.5	9.0	0.4	6.7	18.5	33.0
Robbery.....	232	62.5	15.6	6.46	3.08	2.7	.....	2.7	17.7	9.8
Assault (Misdemeanor).....	1,313	43.3	20.8	7.6	14.9	5.9	1.6	3.5	10.7	35.0
Disorderly conduct	23,503	43.2	17.1	9.7	6.2	10.1	1.5	5.4	25.0	32.0
Disorderly person.	544	43.7	12.1	17.8	2.3	10.6	2.2	6.6	19.8	42.6
Intoxication.....	12,955	42.0	38.0	8.0	1.3	1.5	1.3	2.0	27.8	3.7
Larceny (Misdemeanor).....	2,511	57.1	13.2	9.8	4.9	6.1	0.16	4.14	15.4	27.7
Vagrancy.....	5,149	49.6	25.4	13.6	1.2	1.8	0.6	2.7	19.2	3.25
Violation of Corp. Ord.....	9,808	12.2	2.7	4.6	19.5	17.7	33.4	8.6	20.1	62.4

## ACTUAL NUMBER OF CASES

Disorderly House.	154	36	2	41	8	40	.....	18	83	37
Gambling .....	33	11	6	13	2	1	.....	.....	.....	.....
Gambling House (Keeping).....	66	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	20	8	.....
Abduction.....	17	6	1	1	5	3	1	.....	5	3
Arson .....	8	3	2	1	1	.....	1	.....	1	1
Perjury .....	10	5	.....	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Rape .....	36	10	3	2	15	2	1	1	7	1

Table II.—Distribution of criminality according to nationality in the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx, for the year 1898, according to the report of the Board of City Magistrates for that year. The percentages in the last column are taken as the normal contributions of the given nationalities to the total criminality. By comparing this percentage with the percentages under the nationalities in Table I, the offenses in which a given nationality surpasses its general average, and those in which it is inferior to it, are shown :

Nativity	Population	Total number of persons held for trial, or summarily tried and convicted	Per cent. of given nationality to total population	Per cent. persons of given nativity held for trial or summarily tried and convicted, to whole number so held, or tried and convicted
United States.....	417,100	26,995	21.1	40.2
Ireland .....	409,200	13,137	20.7	19.5
Germany .....	434,700	6,454	22.0	9.6
England .....	42,500	2,030	2.15	3.0
Scotland .....	13,800	555	0.7	0.8
France .....	11,900	982	0.6	1.5
Italy .....	120,600	4,641	6.1	6.9
Russia .....	221,300	5,481	11.2	8.2
Greece .....	5,000	3,659	0.25	5.4
Other countries..	300,500	3,267	15.2	4.9
Totals .....	1,976,600	67,201	100.00	100.00

With 17.85 per cent. of the total population of the two boroughs, that within the jurisdiction of Essex Market court furnishes 22.13 per cent. of the total criminality, 23.8 per cent. of the burglaries, 47.6 per cent. of the homicides, far more than its fair share of the cases of disorderly conduct and intoxication, and somewhat more than its proportion of vagrants. It is below its reputation in its contribution of both grades of assault. The Russians in the district are prominent in their commission of forgery, violation of corporation ordinances, as disorderly persons (failure to support wife or family), both grades of larceny, and of the lighter grade of assault. The reputation for general restlessness of the clientele of Essex Market court seems to be due to the large proportion it furnishes of the totality of arraignments, namely 28 per cent. These and the numerous summons he is asked to issue, often for trivial causes and petty quarrels, may well furnish a magistrate with a vast amount of unpleasant business.

Turning to the other tables, we find that the Russians, with 11.2 per cent. of the whole population, furnish but 8.2 per cent. of the criminality, and applying this last figure, which is their percentage of the total criminality (apart from any question of population), to the percentages in the list of specified offenses, we find that they

surpass their norm in some of the same offenses which furnish their contribution to the criminality of the East Side, *i. e.*, forgery, felonious larceny, as disorderly persons, and as violators of corporation ordinances; but that, as a whole, they are far below their average in the commission of assault. The Russian on the East Side seems somewhat more inclined to violence than his compatriot in the city at large. He is notably but little addicted to intoxication, and furnishes a very small proportion of vagrants. This sobriety and this avoidance of the workhouse are also characteristic of the Italians, who, on the other hand, are more addicted to violence. Further comparisons will be left to the reader, but attention may be called to the remarkable fact that the very small population of Greeks in the two boroughs commit more than 33 per cent. of the violations of corporation ordinances. The high contribution of natives, shown also in Judge Deuel's table, is worthy of note, in that the relative position toward crime of the native of the United States, as compared with that of the foreign-born citizen or resident, shown by the United States census of 1890, seems reversed. The discrepancy is probably due to the fact that the census counts as foreigners, the children born in the United States of parents born abroad, while these appear as natives in the tables here used.

Turning to the civil courts, we find no such official description of their business as is furnished by the reports of the Board of Magistrates, but must rely upon the summary statements issued by the commissioners of accounts, supplemented, it is true, by the information furnished by the valuable report of the Legal Aid Society. Thanks are also due to Judge Roesch, of the Fourth District municipal court for statistics of his court. The litigation of the lower East Side is transacted in the Fourth and Fifth District municipal courts, which include in their jurisdiction the district bounded by the Bowery, Fourteenth Street, East River, and Catharine Street. Below are given tables comparing the number of summons issued by them to those issued in the First and Eighth Districts. The First District transacts an abnormally large proportionate business, because it is the down-town court most convenient to the offices of business men and lawyers, and the court naturally used in many cases where one or both of the litigants is a non-resident with a business office in the city of New York. The Eighth District court, on the West

Side, with a jurisdiction extending from Fourteenth Street to Fortieth Street, and from Sixth Avenue to Hudson River, is chosen for a term of comparison, because a comparatively large proportion of the population which resorts to it is native born.

Table III. showing the number of summons issued in the specified district courts — both actual, and per 1,000 of population, and the proportion of free to paid summons in each court:

MUNICIPAL COURT	FIRST DISTRICT	FOURTH DISTRICT	FIFTH DISTRICT	EIGHTH DISTRICT
Population, 1898.....	56,120	197,600	235,100	163,020
Population, proportion to total....	2.84%	10%	11.9%	8.25%
Paid summonses.....	5,260	2,795	3,239	1,799
Free summonses.....	135	1,650	1,543	695
Total both.....	5,395	4,445	4,782	2,494
Summons per 1,000 of population.	96.1	22.5	20.35	15.30
Summons per 1,000, 1899.....	85.5	22.3	20.89	13.01
Proportion of free summons.....	2.5%	37 %	32 %	27.8%
Proportion of free summons, 1899.	3.6%	34.6%	38.6%	32.6%
Nativity: percentage of 100 births:				
Both parents U. S.....		13 %	8.7%	38.7%
Both parents Russian.....		42.6%	42.6%	2.6%

Table IV.—Municipal courts — Landlord and tenant cases (dispossessions).

MUNICIPAL COURT	FOURTH DISTRICT	FIFTH DISTRICT	EIGHTH DISTRICT
Population, 1898.....	184,895	219,751	152,399
Dispossessions, actual number, 1898.....	6,498	9,372	4,868
“ “ “ “ 1899.....	6,336	9,853	5,324
“ per 1,000, 1898.....	35	42.6	31.9
“ “ “ “ 1899.....	34	44.8	34.9
“ actual number, 1900.....	6,575	9,767	5,156
“ per 1,000, 1900.....	35.5	44.4	33.8

These tables reveal it is true, a somewhat greater tendency to resort to litigation on the East than on the West Side; between 5 and 9 more people in 1,000 apply for a summons on the East Side than do in the Eighth District. But they reveal more strikingly the poverty of the district, in the large proportion of free summonses issued. For a free summons can be issued only when the suit is for a sum of less than \$50, or when a person sues “ in forma



pauperis." The relatively greater number of evictions is evidence of the same poverty, and so is the large business done by the East Side Branch of the Legal Aid Society. This business consists largely of efforts to recover small sums of money due as wages; \$15 would be a high average for all the claims brought to its notice. Many letters are written for the recovery of sums of less than \$1, and suits brought for the recovery of \$5, and of even smaller sums. Seventy-five per cent. of its business is done for Polish and Russian Jews, 50 per cent. of the remainder for Austrian and Roumanian Jews.

Of the total number of judgments obtained, quite a large number are returned unsatisfied (no larger a proportion, however, according to the society's marshal, than in other districts of the city), and this fact might be argued in support of the accusation that the East Side acts upon a low standard of commercial honesty. But a comparison instituted in this manner is not fair. Of the total number of applications to the society, many are settled without recourse to the courts, and many are settled before judgment. In a list of 261 suits examined, 88 were dismissed or discontinued, or resulted in judgments for the defendant; 79 were settled or reported settled; 39 judgments were satisfied, thus leaving 55 cases or a little more than 25 per cent. only, of executions returned unsatisfied. Quite as consonant with the facts at hand as the theory of commercial dishonesty would be the one of the prevalence of a spirit of enterprise out of proportion to the capital of the community; and the frequency of settlements before final judgment may well mean that in a majority of cases the cause of the non-payment of wages is the sheer inability to pay. With regard to the accusation of untruthfulness so freely brought against the litigants of the district, statistics are silent, and the matter must be one of personal impression. In the course of an experience of several months in the East Side office of the Legal Aid Society, the writer believes that usually he has listened to the truth, often colored, of course, by the bias of the relator. The actual and complete denial of a claim is not frequent.

To sum up: The interpretation of these figures seems to show that, judged by the records of the police courts, the native of the United States is, in the city of New York, at least, a more frequent criminal than is the foreign-born

resident or naturalized citizen. They confirm to a certain degree the reputation of the lower East Side for general lawlessness, but absolve the Jew, as judged by the Russian, who is shown to constitute a probably preponderating element in the population, from anything like a proportionate contribution to this lawlessness, excepting as to a few specified offenses. Examining the record of the Russian in the city at large, it is found that he furnishes a low proportion of the general criminality, with a relatively high percentage in the matters of forgery, felonious larceny, refusal or inability to support his family, and in the violation of corporation ordinances. The records of the civil courts seem to show him to be rather more litigious than the average citizen, but they show him, above all, to be poor. As to the matter of commercial dishonesty, the statistics at hand do not justify the accusation, in more than a limited degree, and as to that of untruthfulness, they are silent. A low criminal record, somewhat litigious, very poor, yet furnishing an extremely low contingent to the vagrant classes, these are the characteristics of the East Side Jew, as judged by the Russian. If, from the economic standpoint his very poverty renders him an undesirable competitor, his combination of thrift with sobriety and his slight tendency to crime may well be set off as compensating qualities in any estimate of his value as a future citizen.

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Thirty years ago the conviction of a Jew for a felony was almost unheard of in the city of New York. To-day there is not one penal institution within the area of the Greater New York which does not harbor some offenders of the Jewish people.

It is not difficult to realize the effect of having thousands of Russians and other wandering Jews and their families turned loose on Manhattan Island, causing them to drift into the Ghetto of our metropolis and other congested districts, where immorality and squalor march hand in hand, and side by side. The Jew has been tainted by the new city life into which he has been cast.

If the tribe of Baron de Hirsch would only multiply

and increase as the tribes of Abou Ben Adam, how many of these poor families might be removed from poverty, hunger and dirt to peaceful pastoral sections of our country, there till the soil and thrive in the agricultural pursuits as some now do in New Jersey.

Appreciating the need of having good Jewish influence brought to bear upon the minds of these offenders and to better them, the Society for the Aid of Jewish Prisoners was ushered into existence in 1891 to take up the work that had been looked after by the Conference of New York Rabbis. Its object is "to improve the moral condition of Jewish prisoners in the state of New York, and to lend them a helping hand after their release from penal institutions."

Under the guidance of this organization, Rev. Dr. A. M. Radin holds divine services at the Penitentiary and Workhouse, Blackwell's Island, on every Saturday; at the House of Refuge, Randall's Island every Sunday; at the Kings County Penitentiary in Brooklyn every other week and at the Tombs Prison on Mondays. At Sing Sing Dr. Israel Davidson makes frequent visits, conducts meetings, and looks after the Jewish prisoners. He also performs a similar task at the state penal institution at Naponach. At Auburn Rev. Dr. A. Guttman, of Syracuse, is the Jewish chaplain, and at Clinton Prison (Dannemora) Rabbi Judelson officiates.

The crimes of the Russian Jew are more or less of a nature similar to those of other nationalities and races, although the basest of crimes, murder and manslaughter, are practically unknown to them.

Some years ago there was a tendency to commit arson, but this too has become almost entirely eliminated from the category of offenses among the immigrant Israelites. Most of the offenses are committed by the children of immigrants, who have been contaminated by the vice of our great city and who spurn the advice of their elders, whom they frequently term "greenhorns" and who are unable to exert the necessary influence over them or to command the proper respect.

Offenders guilty of petty larceny and other misdemeanors or of a grand larceny in a minor degree are generally committed to the Blackwell's Island Penitentiary and about eight per cent. of the prisoners at that institution are Jews. This includes persons arrested for selling or ped-

dling on the streets without a license, who are unable to pay a fine.

Vagrants, drunkards, and disorderly characters are committed to the Work House at Blackwell's Island, and it is gratifying to learn that at all times less than two per cent. of the two thousand inmates of that institution are of the Jewish persuasion.

At the Kings County Penitentiary in Brooklyn there are comparatively few males and it is indeed a rarity to find a Jewish girl or woman on the roll.

At the Tombs Prison and Ludlow Street Jail, where persons under indictment are detained, pending trial, the number varies.

About ten per cent. of the young people at Elmira Reformatory are Jewish, but this includes unfortunates from all over the state of New York.

At Auburn Prison there are generally less than a dozen Jewish convicts sentenced for heinous crimes out of a total of more than thirteen hundred.

The same average holds good for Clinton Prison; and at Sing Sing where the New York City convicts, who have committed felonies, are incarcerated, the average number is less than ten per cent. among the Jews.

"Evil associations corrupt good morals," is applicable to the conditions existing in the so-called Ghetto of New York City. During the regime of Tammany Hall the lower East Side of New York City was a hot bed of vice and immorality and the "red light district," as it was termed, became as offensive a glare to the eye as the Tammany rule was a stench to the nostrils.

Young men and women were lured away from their parental roofs and employed as "cadets" to aid as bad a gang of degenerates as ever lived in a civilized community and the then chief of police looked on, and retired, or rather was turned out of office, after Tammany's defeat on the ill-gotten gains of his office.

Young working girls were scoffed at by those who wore silks and satins and had money in their pockets; while the former wore rags and had barely a few coins that they could consider their own. The bad influence and effects can readily be imagined. From lives of immorality developed vagrancy, petty thefts, and more serious offenses. The banal influence of some of the wretches who called



themselves men and women, not only on girls but on boys as well, can be pictured without much difficulty.

Another trait developed by this state of affairs was gambling and when the losses in gambling became extensive, the temptation to forge and steal developed but too soon.

How could such influences help but offset the virtuous instincts of a parental abode, a father's advice, or a mother's prayer?

There was but one solution when the reform government entered on its duties under the leadership of Mayor Low, whose efforts for good were directly turned towards ameliorating the conditions of these depraved and downtrodden Jews and Jewesses, and whose noble purposes must be thoroughly appreciated,—to prosecute all offenders and purify the congested quarter of the great metropolis.

Through the suggestions of this administration the youthful criminals, or rather offenders, were separated from the hardened convicts, as will appear later.

All offenders are brought before a magistrate's court and where the charge is one of disorderly conduct, vagrancy, disturbing the peace, etc., the court sentences them to Blackwell's Island for a few days or sometimes for some months, and sometimes simply imposes a fine and if it is not paid the culprit is sent to the Workhouse on Blackwell's Island.

In instances where a misdemeanor is committed, such as petty larceny, grand larceny in a minor degree, assault in a minor degree, and the like, the accused is held under an amount of bail for the court of special sessions, presided over by three justices at a session—and without a jury—whose authority extends to sentencing offenders for any period not exceeding one year and in imposing fines not in excess of five hundred dollars. Before the case reaches the court of special sessions an indictment must have been found by the grand jury.

In other instances, where the more serious and heinous crimes are committed the city magistrate holds the prisoner, with or without bail, as the exigencies of the case may require, for the grand jury, and in some cases such matters are submitted to the district attorney in the first instance, and he may take the initiative in submitting the facts to the grand jury. After an indictment has been found, the prisoner, where he cannot or may not give bail, is confined in the city prison, familiarly called the Tombs,

until his case is reached in the court of general sessions of the peace, or occasionally in the criminal term of the supreme court, both of which are conducted under the jury system.

Upon conviction the prisoner may be sentenced to any of the state prisons and fined, or in case of minor offenses, which are sometimes disposed of in the last named court, to the penitentiary.

In Brooklyn there is also a court of special sessions, and the Kings County court which possesses criminal jurisdiction in Brooklyn takes the place of the court of general sessions in New York.

Women convicted for felonious crimes are committed to Auburn or to Blackwell's Island or to some reformatory, while males are sent to any one of the penal institutions herein referred to.

During the past two years a number of excellent innovations have become established tending towards preserving youth under sixteen years of age from contamination with older and more hardened and confirmed criminals.

Wherever a boy or girl of tender years is brought before a magistrate, except in heavy criminal cases, the matter is referred to one of the justices of the court of special sessions who presides over a part called the children's court in an entirely separate building away from the environments of the criminal tribunals.

The courts have parole officers whose duty it is to supervise the conduct and movements of the youthful offenders, on whom sentence is suspended. These parole officers report to the court from time to time, and if the reports are favorable the culprits are again free to go where they please and are thus saved from the evil surroundings of a criminal atmosphere in penal institutions.

This parole system is also in vogue in the magistrate's court and frequently sentence is suspended pending favorable reports submitted to the court by parole officers.

Mrs. Sophie C. Axman, a Jewess, who co-operated with the Educational Alliance and looked after the parole cases in the children's court, has now been appointed chief parole officer by the board of justices of the court of special sessions.

In all of the penal institutions, religious services are held for the Jewish inmates by Jewish rabbis, with the

possible exception of the protectories. At the Catholic protectory the boys are taught useful trades and if at any time a Jewish rabbi desires to interview Jewish children he is generally received very cordially.

In sending children or young men to a reformatory the judge or magistrate selects the institution which is conducted in conformity with the religion of the prisoner.

Last year a certificate of incorporation was granted for a Jewish protectory to be managed on the lines similar to the Catholic protectory. Several meetings of the incorporators of the new Jewish Protectory and Aid Society have been held in New York City and more than two hundred thousand dollars have already been subscribed by Jewish members of this great municipality, men whose wealth of heart is commensurate with that of worldly goods, and it is to be expected that in the very near future ground will be bought and buildings erected on the cottage system, and wayward boys and girls taught trades of all kinds. Under the state laws and county regulations the society will receive \$2 per week or \$114 per annum for each youth cared for, but it is estimated that it will cost again as much to maintain the inmates and the remainder of the requisite fund will be raised through donations and annual dues. Hon. Julius M. Mayer, who was recently elected attorney general of New York state, is the president of the new society. Its work will, beyond doubt, be far reaching. When a youthful offender receives his discharge from the protectory he will be proficient in the trade which he has learned and able to support himself in a respectable manner. Through the co-operation of the societies having a hand in the work of the Removal Bureau he may be sent to other parts of the country to work at his trade, to support himself and others, and bequeath to the next generation a fair type of American manhood.

No particular mention has been made as to the litigation in the criminal courts applicable to Jews for the reason that they are all on the same plane with others.

In cases where a Jewish prisoner or other wishes to stand trial and has no attorney the court will always name some member of the bar to defend the case, and there are always interpreters to assist, although there are instances of miscarriage of justice at times.

However, we may be fairly well satisfied with the conditions during the past year in New York, when we realize

how vastly different the empire state treats its Jewish offenders compared with almost every European nation, other than those of the English-speaking countries.

After a Jewish prisoner is discharged, having completed his term of imprisonment, Jewish societies give him a helping hand, and in some instances lead him back into the paths of virtue; often, too, to the greatest paradise on earth, a happy Jewish home circle.



## (B) PHILADELPHIA

What is the relation of the newly arrived Jew of Eastern Europe, generally termed for convenience, the Russian Jew, to American law? In the absence of statistical information or because of ignorance of his peculiar mental and native equipment, erroneous conclusions might be arrived at. The conspicuous presence of the Russian Jew in our courts calls occasionally for hasty, often prejudiced opinions, which the light of the real facts must dispel. If the Russian Jew seems to appear with frequency in the courts, the tendency of the observer, however calm and reserved, to magnify the impression of a novel and individual spectacle must not be forgotten. In the general melange of all kinds of persons of which the assemblage at the courts is made up, few will specially attract the eye save those who are distinguished by some peculiarities of appearance or address or language. Recent immigrants of any nationality almost will be liable to the distinction. The "outlander" is very easily singled out from the throng in whatever country he may be. But in our courts many nationalities, such as English, Irish and German, for obvious reasons, will attract but little special attention because of their near approximation to accepted American types. But when to a latent prejudice is added the striking individual appearance of the Russian Jews, it will be seen that the impression made by them, standing out clearly as they do in the eye of the observer from the rest of the crowd of litigants and suitors, may easily be exaggerated, and a rapid judgment will come to the sincere but perhaps erroneous view that Russian Jews make over frequent appearance in the public forums. Under such circumstances "one swallow may make a whole summer." This caution is here expressed because the writer has found the view to exist upon the part of many persons that the Russian Jew is unduly litigious.

Something needs also to be said of the Russian Jew's previous life and circumstances. His status under the

laws of his native land is uncertain. The only certainty consists in the restrictions which are laid about him and which forbid his assertion of public rights of the commonest order. He is not equal with Russian Christians before the Russian law. It must not be supposed that this dulls his desire for the rights that are withheld and makes him indifferent to their acquisition or importance; on the contrary, as is natural with any people, particularly a people of strong intellectual and moral fibre, the desire is merely whetted by deprivation. Again, in consequence of this civic discrimination and by force of Russia's policy with respect to him, the Jew is shut out of the current of the national life, such as there is, and is thrown back upon himself. From the cares of every day existence, his religion and its books are his recreation, nay, even the chief aim and purpose of his life, and discussion of Jewish law, particularly as contained in the Talmud, becomes the intellectual bread upon which his strong mentality is nourished. The Jewish law will rival in every respect the most important bodies of law which have appeared among men in history; it has its codes and codifications, digests and dicta, precedents, professors and students, great underlying principles, refined scholastic distinctions, quibbles and strength, as have all systems of law. It differs from any modern system in that it makes no distinction between civil law and moral law; all the "civil" law is moral law and all the "moral" law is civil law, a thing which is not true of the common law in force in England and many parts of the United States, in which obligations *ex foro conscientiae* are not necessarily enforceable in *foro legis*. There is a whole great range of human relations, rights, and obligations into which the common law does not enter and with which it does not concern itself, but the Jewish law concerns itself with all relations between men, and even between men and God, and has been the supreme regulation of Jewish life for long centuries. An aptitude for law, an appreciation of its value, a delight in its intellectual contests, and a reverence for its decision is a natural inheritance of the Jewish people. The repressions of Russian policy do not destroy this abiding faith in law; and the freedom of America encourages it. So much for a few points of general application.

The situation of the Russian Jew in Philadelphia does

not differ materially from his situation in other cities of similar size except in a small degree caused by local peculiarities. He is alert, progressive, and thrifty. He enters quickly into business and by hard work and energetic application has made a place for himself in a short time. He is fairly successful in the small shop and by gradual stages comes to have the large manufacturing establishment, and his signs may be seen in all the important wholesale streets of the city. He is a handicraftsman and an employer of labor, and there is probably no branch of trade in which he is not represented in some way. In the mazes of business and investment with others, intricate relations result naturally in a proportionable amount of "lawing" and its incidents. He is a quick student and has early learned the lesson that legal advice in time is a preventive of law suits; conscious of certain handicaps of speech and the other concomitants of a foreign birth, he avails himself freely of the training and skill of the lawyer.

An important part in the legal life of the Russian Jew is played by Russian Jewish notaries public. A number of Russian Jews hold commissions as notaries and have offices in the Russian Jewish district. Their contact with law gives them a smattering of legal knowledge and they not only authenticate papers notarially, but do a quasi-legal business, drawing with more or less skill contracts and papers, engaging in real estate transactions, insurance, and the like, and acting as semi-professional, semi-friendly advisers generally. These "notary public shops," as they have been aptly termed, are the necessary local requirement of a people who need legal services and who turn naturally to those they know best for such assistance. Usually there is a qualified attorney-at-law who either maintains a branch office with the notary public or to whom the latter refers the more difficult part of his business.

No other class of citizens not native born figures as largely in the civil lists of the courts, because no other class as quickly makes its way in the industrial world and enters so keenly into its life and intricacies. But as compared with the whole population, and keeping in view the Russian Jew's business interests, statistical data do not show any undue litigiousness.<sup>1</sup> Of a total of 1,330 cases listed

<sup>1</sup> It is estimated that there are about 100,000 Jews in Philadelphia (of whom 75,000 are Russian Jews), out of a total population of 1,300,000 for the city.

for trial in a trial term of the Philadelphia courts of common pleas, Russian Jews were plaintiffs or defendants or both in 112 cases, a percentage of 8.42; a similar list of 770 cases of another period showed 54 Russian Jewish cases, a percentage of 7.01. The percentage of Russian Jewish cases may safely be placed between seven and eight, a result verified from other court list data. This is close to the Russian Jew's actual percentage of population and would indicate a closer identification with its business and other interests than is the case with other immigrant peoples, whose percentage of "lawing" is not so high and whose activities are correspondingly not so great. The figures therefore show not an indication of obnoxious assertiveness, but a plain result of business and industrial activity.

In the magistrates' or justices' courts (having a civil jurisdiction of cases where not more than one hundred dollars is involved) no very accurate information is obtainable, owing to their number and the relative inaccessibility of their records. Certain magistrates in sections of the city near to the Russian Jewish districts have a large proportion of their business emanating from Jews. The cases are vigorously pressed and as vigorously fought, but one of the magistrates, who had a large amount of this class of business, informed the writer that there is a strong tendency to arbitrate cases, and this is a well known practice, whether before or after a case is begun in court. Some rabbi, a well-known banker, or business man, a notary public, is selected as arbitrator and the difficulty is peaceably adjusted. The rabbi has great influence in this direction and it would seem is most frequently the arbitrator.

A reference to his standing in the world of real estate, including its buying, selling, mortgaging and the like, which is closely allied to the world of general law, will show that the Russian Jew is alive to the merits of the building association system, and to the merits of real estate, whether for investment or personal use. A considerable number of Russian Jewish real estate brokers, agents and dealers of good standing, whose clientele grows rapidly beyond the Russian Jewish circle, attests his active participation in this important field. The daily newspaper lists of real estate transactions show an increasing number of Jewish names; and the Russian Jew is well represented at the sales at leading real estate exchanges.



That he is provident is markedly shown in these real estate dealings. He buys real estate with the idea of saving his money; he buys when he has but a small amount of money to invest, leaving the rest upon easy payment mortgage, which he slowly and surely pays off, though his earnings be but small; he buys not expecting or anticipating to be foreclosed, but intending to save and eventually to acquire clear a home, a shop, or an investment, and the mortgage acts as a spur instead of a weight. Hence he is considered a good "moral risk" in the matter of mortgage loans. He is besides steadily advancing into the field of the larger real estate and building operations.

The field of criminal law presents some interesting features. There is a considerable amount of this class of litigation. There was a time when the presence of a Jew in the criminal court was of exceeding rarity; it is not so now. Yet this important fact must be remembered; as noted above, when the Russian Jew does appear his striking individuality will stand out in such strong relief as to leave a lasting impression and draw many to the conclusion that the Jew is occupying a considerable part of the time of the criminal court. The writer has heard court officers speak in this way; they forget the thousands of cases in which men of no special peculiarity appeared in court but remember with great vividness the Jews who pass before them. This is understandable, but quite wrong. An illustration of how this alien appearance works against the Jew may not be out of place. If a Jew in business difficulty should confess judgment to those whom he wishes to prefer among his creditors, the fact would be remembered, while if it were done by a non-Jew, no one would remember it as a tendency of the particular class. Recently a large corporation with public purposes confessed judgment in favor of certain creditors who were also its managers and officers; by this process a large number of claims against the company were effectually rendered worthless. The matter attracted passing attention but it will certainly not be stigmatized as a characteristic of the people who effected this highly inequitable result. Yet the incident was as flagrant as any that could be cited.

An examination of the kind of crimes prevalent among Jews reveals no cause for serious alarm. The majority are assault and battery cases of a trivial description and

they arise quite naturally. The living together in large numbers, several families in a house, the keen business rivalry, bring, with a people of the excitable, nervous temperament of the Jew, frequent occasions when high words pass and—infrequently—a blow is struck;—infrequently because in many cases the whole trouble is mere hot language and threatening gestures. As the slightest touching in anger is in technical law a battery, ample material for a prosecution on the part of an angry man or woman is provided. Not unusually the other party, spurred on by the institution of legal proceeding and as a measure of protection by way of counter offense, institutes a cross-charge, and it is found that a large proportion of these Russian Jewish assault and battery cases consists of counter bills. The result is generally that by the time the matter comes to court, both parties, now in cooler blood, are heartily sick of the whole matter, a better feeling ensues, and both cases are submitted by agreement and dropped. When they proceed so far as a trial, it generally results in the jury acquitting both sides, being unable to determine from the conflicting evidence who is guilty; the presumption of innocence until guilt is proven controls and there is a happy ending for the contestants. But not infrequently the mediation of some cool-headed friend, who makes an appeal to their good “Jewish feeling,” produces the desired result of peace.

These conclusions are not merely the result of collated opinions of those informed on the subject, but are verified by statistical data. The result of one hundred and sixty assault and battery cases against Jewish defendants tried in the Philadelphia courts in one year was but twenty-nine convictions and one hundred and thirty-one acquittals.

Other crimes committed by Jews are quite below the proportion in the whole community. Some of them grow out of the Jew's prominence in business. Cases of larceny by bailee arise, as where in a dispute over the amount due by a manufacturer of clothing to a finisher, the finisher retains the articles until he is paid, and the manufacturer causes his arrest. These are really civil disputes, which, however, may be brought technically within a criminal statute; they are generally settled amicably. Isolated cases of embezzlement, forgery, larceny, malicious mischief, conspiracy, receiving stolen goods and the like, sometimes

technically, sometimes substantially true, occur, but they are not unduly frequent.

Before the institution of the juvenile court, a considerable number of larceny cases appeared against Jews; so also a fair number of malicious mischief cases. Many of these were cases of petty depredations by boys which would now be met by the more adequate remedies of the juvenile court. It is true that the once unsullied name of the Jew is not now unspotted, but the fault is not so much with the Jew as with those trying conditions, for which he is not responsible, under which these deplorable results have appeared. The tyranny practiced against him in his old home and the utterly different conditions of American life to which he is suddenly transported, conditions of bad housing and the like, and the demands of a business world whose prevailing standards are not always of the highest, demanding tense vigilance and strenuous zeal, contribute to the cause.

Data of tried cases in a year show the following results: Twenty cases of obtaining money or a valuable thing by cheating or misrepresentation showed four convictions and sixteen acquittals; four cases of receiving stolen goods resulted in one conviction and three acquittals; five cases of perjury resulted in no convictions and five acquittals; of arson not a single case was found during the year in question; homicide is almost unknown.

If the keeping of bawdy houses and prostitution, once practically unknown among Jews, have made their appearance in Philadelphia as in other American cities, it is to be remembered that the former freedom of the Jews from these evils rather over-emphasizes their spread.

Some curious violations of the criminal law and the laws of marriage occur through reliance upon the provisions of the Jewish law, in ignorance of the law of the state. The *gett* (divorce) duly granted according to the Jewish law, is of course of no avail in the courts here, though it is in Russia.

Similarly cases of marriage within consanguineous degrees forbidden by the state law but allowed by the Jewish law and innocently contracted, have arisen. No disposition of the authorities to punish innocent defendants in such cases appears. The rabbis have taken some steps to prevent this conflict of laws, one suggestion being a



refusal to grant the Jewish divorce until the civil divorce has been obtained.

The following data of the inmates of prisons and reform institutions in Philadelphia are of interest:

In the Eastern Penitentiary (prisoners committing the graver crimes in the eastern part of Pennsylvania are sent to this prison) there were on November 17, 1904, in all 1,121 prisoners, of whom 20 were Jews, a percentage of 1.78, which is very small as compared with the percentage of population, which is 7.7 per cent. Of these, 11 or not quite one per cent. of the whole number of prisoners, were Jews of Eastern Europe, Russia, Austria, etc.; 7 were Jews born in the United States, one in England, and one in Scotland. The nativity of the parentage of these has not been ascertained. The following were the crimes committed by the Eastern European Jews: Murder 1,<sup>1</sup> larceny and receiving 1, larceny and entering 2, burglary, larceny and horse stealing 1, false pretenses 1, forgery 1, counterfeiting 1, assault and battery with intent to rape 1, distilling whisky without giving bond 1, breaking and entering 1.

In the Philadelphia county prison the total number of convicts (December 12, 1904) was 509, of whom 18, or 3.54 per cent., were Jews. Of these, 12, or 2.36 per cent., of the total number of prisoners, were born in Russia, 3 in the United States, 2 in Germany and 1 in England. The following were the charges: Larceny 6, aggravated assault and battery 2, forgery 3, receiving stolen goods 3, robbery 2, burglary 1, involuntary manslaughter 1.

Grouping these data it is found that Jews are inmates of the prisons for serious crimes to the extent of 2.66 per cent., while the Jew's percentage of the population is 7.7 per cent., or nearly three times as great.

Juvenile delinquency among Russian Jews has perhaps aroused the most discussion. The causes of this are again largely economic; housing conditions are bad; the parents are hard-working and too busy with earning the livelihood to pay sufficient attention to their children, who, left to themselves, learn idle or vicious habits on the streets and in the thousand ways of imitative childhood. Besides many children very early help in the family support and as newsboys in large numbers on the streets and in the

<sup>1</sup> As noted above, it is an isolated case.



lower classes of employment are deprived of the opportunity of refining influences. In addition, the child, quickly Americanized, speedily finds a gulf between itself and its parents in respect of religious and other sentiments, and the parental authority grows less and less of a restraint. The juvenile court, with its system of probation officers, and Jewish agencies and the settlements and other kindred institutions, is working acceptably with this condition.

In the House of Refuge for boys at Glen Mills, Pa. (which is a high grade corrective institution and not a prison), out of a total of 766 inmates, 61, or 7.96 per cent., were Jews, almost all of whom were Eastern European. Of these, twenty-seven were charged with larceny, twenty-four with incorrigibility and the others with various delinquencies, such as running away from home, fighting, keeping bad company, malicious mischief, and the like.

In the Girls' House of Refuge, out of a total of 127 inmates, 8, or 3.81 were Jewish, all charged with being incorrigible.

There is no specifically Jewish institution to receive delinquent children, but Jewish organizations are providing private places for their care. There is no doubt that the previous rarity of delinquency of this kind among Jews accentuates the dismay felt at its recent manifestation. As economic conditions better for the Jew, however, and as some of the agencies now at work grow in influence and assist where the parents are unable to influence, the matter will be adjusted.

The Russian Jew on the whole appears in a favorable light from the standpoint of the law. Such criticisms as may be made are apt to be exaggerated, and where just should rather be made against conditions for which he is not responsible and of which he is the victim. He has not lost his character as, and is pre-eminently, a law-abiding citizen, earnestly interested in the welfare of the state, and no less keenly alive to his civic responsibilities than to his civic privileges.

## (C) CHICAGO

I shall first review the litigation most common amongst Russian Jews in the civil branch of the courts. They are: Suits growing out of contracts of bargain and sale of merchandise, personal injuries, matters relating to personal property, marriage and divorce, real property, bankruptcy.

A little more than half of the Jewish population in the city of Chicago are engaged in the mercantile business and hence disputes often arise as to the quality of the goods, manner and time of delivery and similar matters. Suits are also frequently brought for goods sold and delivered. In most of the cases, there is generally a good and bona fide defense. Cases of this kind seldom go by default, unless the defendant be a bankrupt, or contemplates bankruptcy. The courts, however, are not much bothered with litigation of this class. A great many of the cases are tried and disposed of by arbitration, or are submitted to the orthodox Jewish rabbis for decision. In this connection, it is worth while mentioning that the orthodox Jewish rabbis of this city have organized a tribunal with all the formalities and forms prescribed by the Talmudic law, which has proven a blessing to the Jewish community in keeping the people out of courts. Matters are disposed of with great dispatch and all parties interested seem to be always satisfied.

*Personal Injuries.* Since so large a portion of the Jewish population is engaged in industrial pursuits, working in factories of every description, which are operated by dangerous machinery, many become injured in the usual course of such employments. The number of injured Russian Jews is augmented by the terrible condition of the street car system of the city of Chicago. It is a noteworthy fact that during working hours it requires a great effort for a workman to reach home. Conductors do not stop at the crossings, the cars are always overcrowded; people become maimed in their efforts to either get on or off the cars. As a consequence considerable litigation is

pending in our courts in behalf of Russian Jews, growing out of personal injury sustained by them, either during their employment or while going or coming from work. There are very few suits of this kind pending against them as defendants.

*Marriage and Divorce.* There is considerable litigation in the courts growing out of the relation of husband and wife. Hasty marriages and marriages on the part of girls for the sake of quitting work in the sweat-shops or other undesirable factory places, without regard to the fitness and temperament of contracting parties, are in a great measure responsible for this condition, but with all this, it cannot be said that there is a greater percentage of divorce cases than among other nationalities in Chicago.

*Real Estate.* To judge of the progress that Russian Jews have made in this city, we must take into consideration the large extent of real estate acquired by them within the last fifteen years. It may be said with a certainty that 65 per cent. of all the real property in the so-called Ghetto district, comprising the portions of the Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Wards occupied by Russian Jews, is owned by them. This is exclusive of real estate owned by Russian Jews in other parts of the city of Chicago and county of Cook. It is natural that men owning real estate should have disputes with tenants and hence litigation growing out of the relationship of landlord and tenant, but during all my experience as a practicing attorney among Russian Jews I did not find one case of a heartless landlord in the true sense of the word, but in most instances there were circumstances, some in favor of the plaintiff and others in that of the defendant, which at least justify litigation in court. The proportion of suits of this kind is considerably less among Russian Jews than among other classes of citizens in the city of Chicago.

*Bankruptcy.* The Russian Jew arriving in this country without capital usually establishes his business with a small capital, saved up as result of hard work. A recent immigrant, he is not in a condition to enable him to scrutinize business transactions without blunder. He is not yet up to the nice business tricks practiced by the Boards of Trade and the great financiers and business men of America, who are so proficient in organizing trusts and corporations. Therefore he frequently mistakes the course of action nec-

essary in his business ventures and as a consequence is sometimes led into bankruptcy. Russian Jews were therefore obliged to avail themselves of the benefit of the bankruptcy law. An investigation of the clerk's office of the district court of the United States in Chicago discloses the fact that every Russian Jew who filed a petition in bankruptcy was granted a discharge by the courts, thus showing a presumptive absence of fraud in business transactions.

*Crimes.* There were a number of cases tried in the police courts against Russian Jews, in which men were charged with abandonment of wife and children, but in most cases the magistrates effected a reconciliation and the charge was dropped. I could find no record in the criminal court of any case against a Russian Jew charged with abduction of an unmarried female. No indictments were found in the year 1904 against a Russian Jew or Jewess on the statutory crime of abortion. No convictions were had in the criminal court on the charge of adultery.

The oft-repeated charge of arson against the Jews finds no substantiation in the annals of the criminal court of Cook County. During the year 1904 not a single Jew was indicted by the grand jury on a charge of arson. The police courts in the Ghetto districts are often called upon to try cases of assault and battery, but in a majority of instances there is no prosecution when these cases are called for trial. There were three convictions of Russian Jews in the criminal court, during the years of 1903 and 1904 on the charge of bigamy; they were brought about by the energetic action of the United Hebrew Charities. There were no indictments against Russian Jews on the charge of bribery within the last fifteen years. There were three cases of burglary against Russian Jews during the year 1904, resulting in two convictions.

Four Russian Jews were convicted during the years 1903 and 1904 for conspiracy to commit an illegal act. Cases of embezzlement and extortion by threats were quite rare; while there might have been cases of this kind in the police courts very few of them ever reached the criminal court. There were a number of cases in the criminal court against Russian Jews on the charge of obtaining goods under false pretenses, but in most instances there were acquittals. There were no convictions of any Russian Jew on the charge of forgery in the criminal court within the last three



years. Ten Russian Jews were convicted for bucket-shopping. Two Russian Jews were tried and convicted in 1904 for manslaughter. In both cases, insanity was the defense. During the entire history of the criminal court of Chicago there was not a single case of a Russian Jew on the charge of incest or kidnapping. About twenty Russian Jews, mostly junk dealers, pawn-brokers, and second-hand dealers, were indicted during the year 1904 for receiving stolen property. One of the convicted men was sentenced to the penitentiary and the others received jail sentences and were fined. There were no convictions on charges of malicious mischief and mayhem, and no indictments for perjury were returned during the year 1904. Not a single Russian Jew was convicted on the charge of vagrancy.

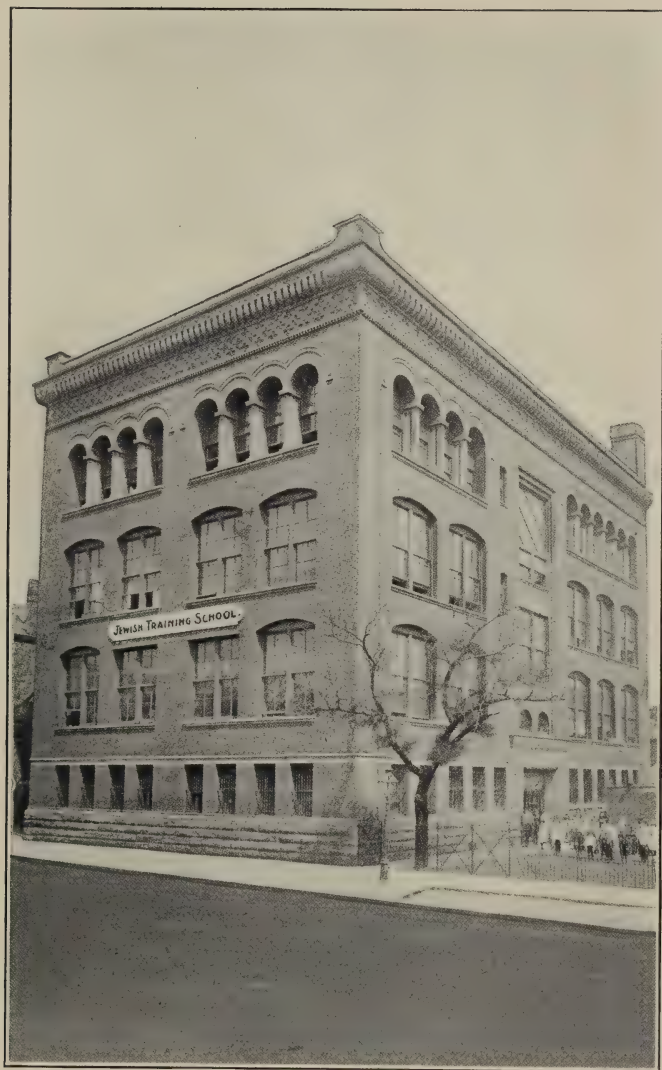
*Violations of City Ordinances.* It is a fundamental principle of law that everybody is supposed to know the law and that ignorance of the law is no excuse. The word "law" includes the common law, constitutional law, statutory and municipal ordinances.

It is monstrous to suppose that a Russian Jew, a recent immigrant, should know all these laws, much less the municipal ordinances which are passed at one session of the city council and repealed at another. (In this connection, I call attention to the legal absurdity, that while everybody is supposed to know of the existence of municipal ordinances, the judge who tries the case is not supposed to know that such an ordinance in fact exists. He takes no judicial notice of a municipal ordinance unless it has been exhibited to him in proper form and proved up in accordance with all the rules of evidence.)

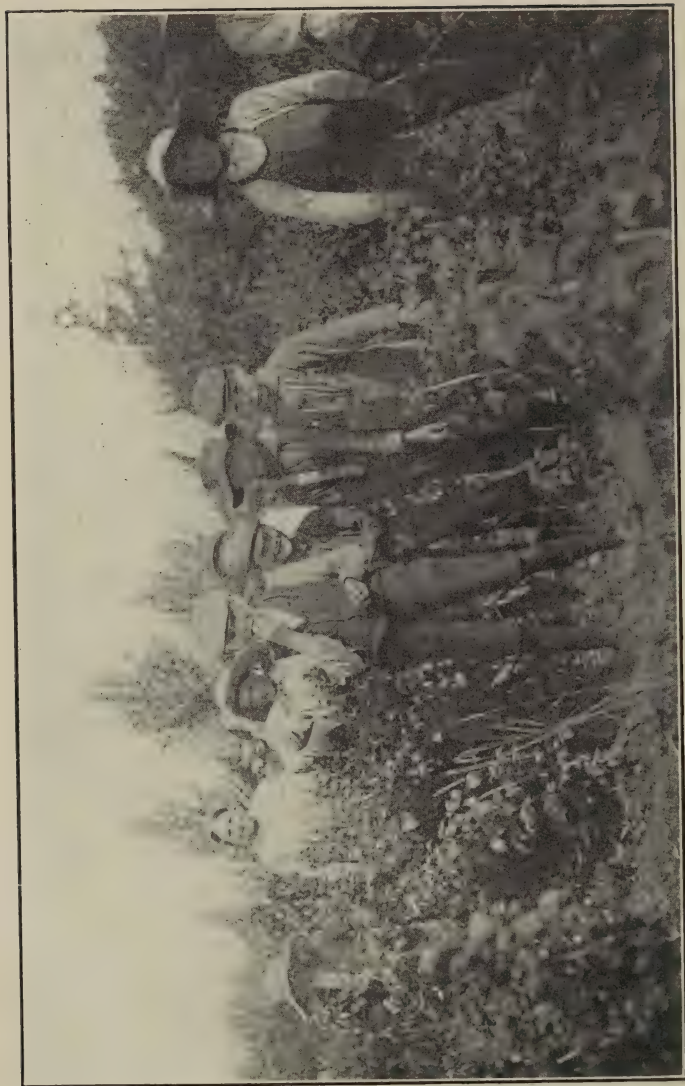
It is therefore natural that there should be violations of municipal ordinances, because of the ignorance of the people of the existence of such ordinances, and not necessarily because of a desire to violate them. Russian Jews are frequently the victims of police officers, who delight in arresting for a violation of a city ordinance with prospect of the harvest of the ward politicians and professional bailers, who are always on hand to help out a "friend."

The information furnished above is based upon personal investigation and knowledge of the writer with litigation among Russian Jews during a law practice, in the city of Chicago, for the past twelve years.





JEWISH TRAINING SCHOOL, CHICAGO, ILL.



CHICAGO JEWISH TRAINING SCHOOL PUPILS PICKING BERRIES  
*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, Berrien County, Mich.*



XI  
DISTRIBUTION

## DISTRIBUTION

A consideration of the status of any people would be incomplete without determining the effect of their geographical situation. This is particularly applicable to the Jews, because of their remarkable adaptability to environment. The Jew in America is still a stranger in a strange land. True, there are a few who can boast of two or three generations in this country, but they are largely in the minority.

There is only one noteworthy tendency that can be observed in the distribution of the Jews in this country that is different from the tendencies in other large classes of immigrants. Scandinavian immigrants, for instance, are largely found in one section of the country, in the wheat-fields of the Northwest. Italians are where there is need for laborers in gangs or for what might be termed itinerant labor. The Slavs from Russia and Austria are in the mining districts. These three large classes of immigrants move along simple, well-defined lines. The distribution of the Jews, though not so well defined on the surface, is due to tendencies that are peculiar to himself. Having been a city-dweller for centuries, the love for city life is strong within him. We cannot therefore expect to find him on the prairies of the West, in the coal mines of the East or the plantations of the South. We see him in the larger cities of the country, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, San Francisco and others nearly as large; and wherever he is found in the smaller towns and villages, the original settlement, we can rest assured, was made by those whose headquarters had first been a large city in the vicinity.

This being practically the only phenomenon to be observed in the distribution of the Jew in America, how meagre was our knowledge of the situation, and how unsatisfactory and discouraging to those who realized that the peculiar conditions attendant upon the large influx of Jews and their consequent congestion in the sea-port towns

made it necessary that they be distributed. Either the courage of those who undertook the enterprise must be commended or the pressing need deplored, or, perhaps, both. Artificial distribution was begun four years ago and the movement, self-styled "Industrial Removal," has become known in every city and town in the country where Jews are to be found. Whether this stimulated distribution will show results markedly different from those consequent upon a more natural distribution cannot, of course, be accurately determined for some time. Be that as it may, however, the movement itself is most interesting and the results thus far obtained will be instructive in throwing some little light upon the question as a whole.

In consequence of the many restrictive laws of Roumania, there began in the year 1900 a large influx of Roumanian Jews into this country. The normal Jewish immigration then averaged about 45,000 annually, the majority of whom remained in New York, which city already at that time contained over 500,000. This large immigration has been going on since 1881; over 70 per cent. of those who arrived in the United States remained in New York. One of the results of this movement was the gradual congestion of the immigrant population in one part of the city, called the East Side. So much has been published of the conditions prevailing in the so-called New York Ghetto that it is not necessary here to dwell upon them.

Those who were actively interested in the question of Jewish immigration realized that, though the conditions in Roumania demanded the continuance of this immigration, it was essential to divert the stream away from New York. They understood, too, that the problem of Jewish immigration to the United States was not local merely because the vast majority of ocean steamships disembarked their human cargoes in the harbor of New York. They argued that these people do not come to New York; they come to America, and so the question of immigration is of national interest; that is to say, it was incumbent on Jews all over the country to help bear the burden of caring for these friendless refugees and making them self-supporting. The plan to be pursued, therefore, must be one by which the immigrants were to be distributed all over the country, in towns where economic and industrial conditions are better than in the metropolis.

The question that arose in the minds of these men was

how to arouse the Jewish communities to a sense of their duty in accepting as many as they had reasonable assurance of placing in self-supporting positions. What agency could be employed that would effectively reach these communities? The answer to this query was the Independent Order B'nai B'rith. It was peculiarly fitted to undertake the stupendous task of distributing these immigrants upon their arrival by virtue of its character as a strong and comprehensive organization, represented in most important towns and cities in the Union. The Executive Committee of the B'nai B'rith issued bulletins to the various lodges in the West and South, explaining the situation, earnestly requesting them to organize in such a way as to make it possible to effect the purpose in view. As a result of the encouraging assurance of co-operation on the part of these lodges, a committee was organized in New York for the purpose of handling the situation in systematic fashion. This committee established a local office, whose business it became to open communication with the lodges which had responded, and to prosecute the work of distribution practically.

In a short time it was discovered that there were many difficulties in the way of conducting this work successfully, by no means the least of which was the necessity of overcoming the unwillingness of the newly-arrived Roumanians to leave New York after they had found friends and relatives there. Owing to this difficulty, and also to the fact that there were many Jews in New York from other countries who were also out of work, the subject acquired a new aspect. The conviction forced itself upon the minds of the committee that in order not to augment the congestion in New York, particularly in view of the fact that in addition to the Roumanians, there were thousands of Russians and Galicians constantly coming, it was necessary that a process of clearing the way should be put into execution. The number of Roumanians sent away was so small as hardly to affect the conditions here; and, as these conditions were not improving, it was decided to extend the privilege to all of our co-religionists who were out of work and who showed promise of becoming self-supporting. This conviction showed itself in a practical manner in the establishment of the Industrial Removal Office in February of 1901.

Removal work was undertaken with well-defined purposes



in view. On the one hand it was to assist in making self-supporting those unemployed Jews of New York who were willing to go West or South. On the other hand these persons were to become the centres of attraction for others in Europe who were destined for the United States. That is to say, they were to become a means to divert those immigrants from New York to various points in the interior who would under any circumstances come to this country, and who would otherwise take up their domicile in New York. As far as the former function is concerned, the Industrial Removal Office is a philanthropic institution seeking to better the social and economic conditions of New York Jews. The other purpose it is seeking to carry out is broader and has as its motive the desire to establish a permanent plan of relief for thousands of Jews, who in the aggregate present a serious problem to American Jewry. The movement in its conception is thoroughly rational and scientific, because it is, so to speak, cleansing and inoculating the entire body by local treatment, and in so doing it is at the same time helping to relieve the local distress.<sup>1</sup>

Hon. Frank P. Sargent, Commissioner General of Immigration,<sup>2</sup> stated: "In my judgment the smallest part of the duty to be discharged in successfully handling alien immigrants with a view to the protection of the people and institutions of this country is that part now provided for by law. Its importance, though undeniable, is relatively of secondary moment. It cannot, for example, compare in practical value with, nor can it take the place of measures to insure the distribution of the many thousands who come in ignorance of the industrial needs and opportunities of this country, and, by a more potent law than that of supply and demand, which speaks to them here in an unknown tongue, colonizes alien communities in our great cities. Such colonies are a menace to the physical, moral and political security of the country. They are hotbeds for the propagation and growth of those false ideas of political and personal freedom, whose germs have been vitalized by ages of oppression under unequal and partial laws, which find their first concrete expression in resistance to the con-

<sup>1</sup> For detailed information of the actual results of removal work see reports of Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society for 1901, 1902 and 1903. See also paper read before Jewish Chautauqua Summer Assembly in 1903, and paper read before the Third Conference of Jewish Charities in the United States, New York, 1904.

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration*, 1903, p. 60.

stituted authority, even occasionally in the assassination of the lawful agents of that authority. They are the breeding grounds, also, of moral depravity; the centres of propagation of physical disease. Above all, they are the congested places in the industrial body which check the free circulation of labor to those parts where it is most needed and where it can be most benefited. Do away with them and the greatest peril of immigration will be removed."

The Commissioner's official recommendation was anticipated when the Removal Office was established; that is to say, artificial distribution is of itself one of the strongest advocates of unrestricted immigration and will continue to be so as long as it is effective. Whether the Removal Office has been effective in carrying out its objects can be judged by the actual results thus far obtained. Though four years seem a very short time in which to pass upon the results of the work, it is not excessive enthusiasm that prompts those engaged in it to say that it has evolved out of its experimental stage and has shown its necessity for continuing, so long as large members of Jews emigrate. Of course the movement must be judged in its two aspects. As a philanthropic undertaking it has assisted over 16,000 persons to become self-supporting, who before were on the verge of dependency. So far as its second function is concerned, the results, though not quite so definite, are still encouraging to a surprising degree, as those results were not expected to be seen for years to come. The percentage of those Jewish immigrants who remained in the city in the years 1898 and 1899 was 79.9 per cent. and 79.2 per cent. respectively. These, it should be noted, are the two years preceding the establishment of the Removal Office. In the year 1903, two years thereafter, the percentage of immigrants who remained in New York was 71.9 per cent., showing that about 8 per cent. more left for the interior in that year than in 1898 and 1899. Though this is not conclusive evidence that the diversion of Jewish immigration has been effected so quickly, yet this discrepancy is due in a large degree to this artificial distribution. The records of the Removal Bureau also show a large number of persons that went into the interior directly from Europe to persons originally sent away by the Bureau from New York, who for the most part would have come to the seaport metropolis had their relatives remained there.

The results could have been much more imposing were

it not for a two-fold obstacle that has largely hampered the activities of the Bureau. It has taxed the energies of the management to the utmost to adjust and reconcile in every practical and legitimate manner the prejudice and timidity of the immigrant with the same qualities — in a different form — as the majority of the people of the interior communities. It has been a process mainly of gaining the confidence of the beneficiary on the one hand and of the benefactor on the other. The interior communities, realizing in a large degree the extreme and pressing necessity for the work, still failed at the beginning to thoroughly grasp the situation; there was a sentimental desire on their part to help the refugees from Eastern European oppression, but when they found that the practical manner of helping them along the lines of the Removal Office meant not only sacrifice of time and money, but real annoyance and disagreeable experiences, then their charitable sentiment received a shock, from which some have not recovered to this day. Industrial conditions all over the country have also been such as to force restrictions upon orders for people and prevented the removal of some deserving persons who have been so unfortunate as not to come within the requirements demanded by the communities of the interior. All this has been the great difficulty on the one side. The obstacle to be met with in New York, on the other, has been the unwillingness on the part of the majority of the people to leave the city. Not merely have the attractions of the wonderful seaport metropolis held them back, but ignorance and consequent fear of the unknown and mysterious have largely deterred them from applying at the Bureau. Only such as have been possessed of a comparatively fearless and independent character, or who have received encouraging reports from friends or relatives in the interior have had the courage to ask that they be sent away. This forced selection, artificial in a large measure, will probably show results different from that brought about by a natural distribution. What this difference will be is hard to conjecture.

The Bureau has attempted to settle some of the more promising men in the small towns of the South and the West where few or no Jews are found. In a number of cases such settlement has been permanent, but better success can be obtained in settling the people in the smaller towns when such towns are within a reasonable distance of some large



city. The Bureau's experience has shown that the best results can be obtained where the artificial distribution observes as closely as possible the natural law of distribution mentioned before. Indeed, of late the exigencies of the work have also helped to gradually develop a system of agencies in the large cities, which already have begun to place a portion of those sent them to the small towns and villages in their immediate vicinities.

Though this law of distribution is practically the only definite phenomenon that has appeared, it cannot be doubted that the movement contains far-reaching possibilities. What the effect of this distribution will be ethnically, what it will be religiously, as well as what it will be economically are questions of intense interest, which unfortunately cannot be answered at the present time.

Then, too, the question can be viewed from the subjective standpoint; that is, not merely as to the effect upon those removed, but what will it be upon those who are good enough to receive them? Among the many communities that have been enlisted in the cause of removal and who co-operate with warmth and sympathy with the Bureau are such as were practically altogether isolated from the rest of American Jewry until after the visit of the Bureau's representative. Such a visit not only succeeded in arousing their interest in removal work, but encouraged interest in other Jewish questions. In other words "removal" has already shown itself to be a factor in arousing among our country cousins what is commonly called, in the pulpit, a Jewish consciousness.

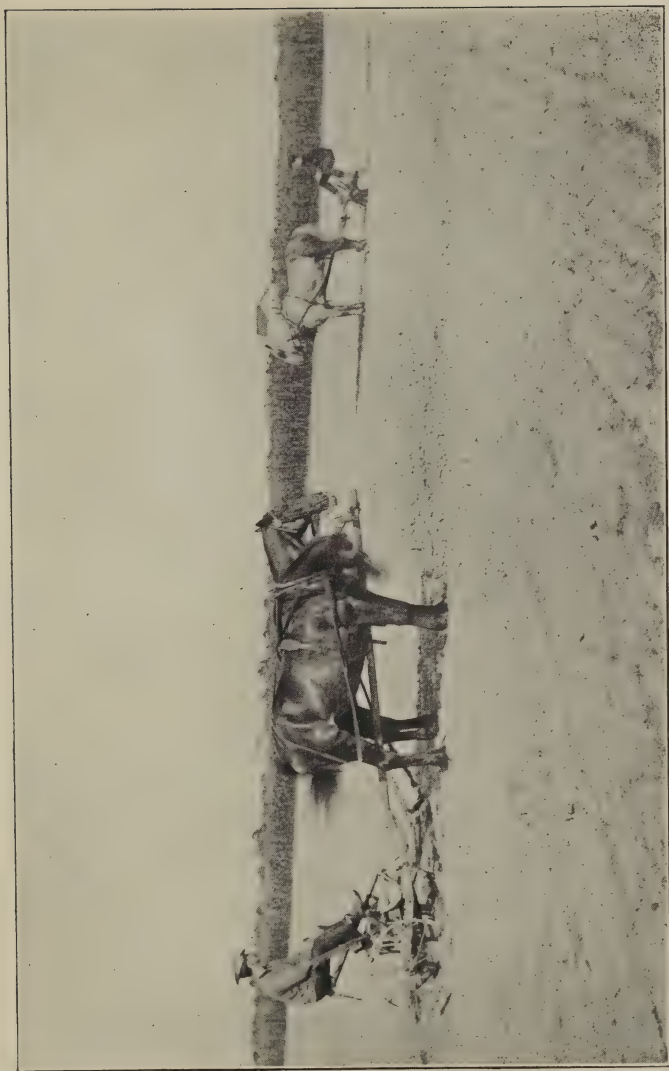
It is too obvious to require comment that a great many dependents apply at charitable institutions who are out of employment because there is no work to be found in their peculiar line. However, there may be a demand for workmen of just such trades in other cities in the Union. That is to say, much poverty is caused by the immobility of labor, and "inter-removal," so to speak, is a method of reducing this evil. For the present, of course, no such general scheme of removal would be justifiable in view of the pressing needs of the seaport metropolis, which is laboring under the enormous burden of a stupendous immigration. But should the happy time come when the stream of immigration is successfully diverted from New York to many points in the interior, then such a scheme would undoubtedly be instrumental in helping a great many poor,



deserving persons and families in becoming self-supporting, and in a manner containing elements of smaller danger than any other form of charity.

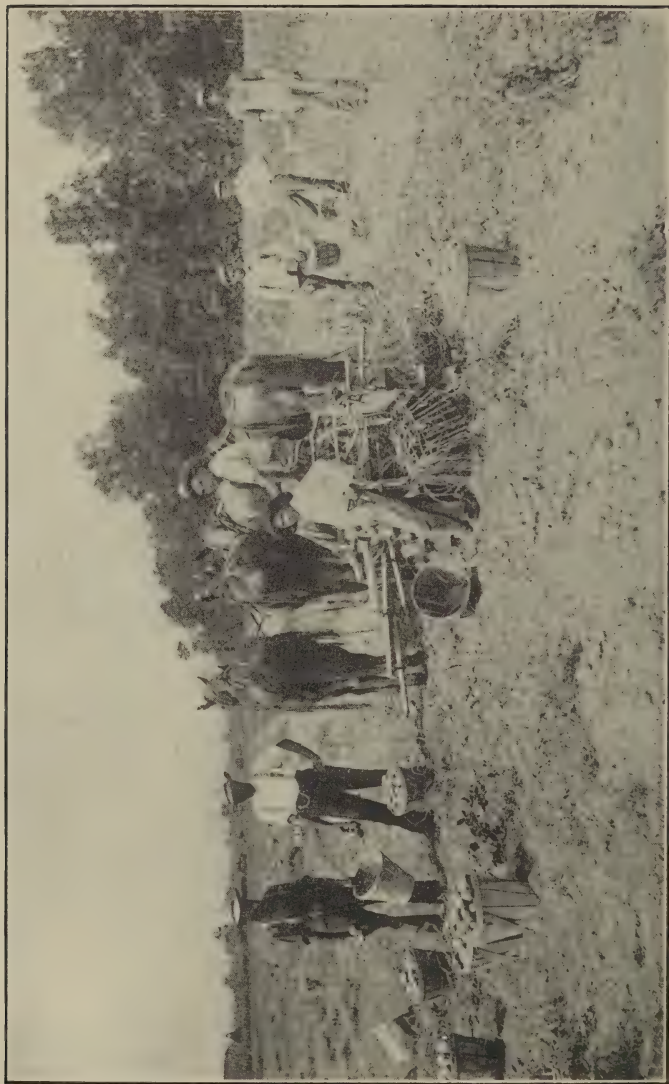
The immigration of nearly one million Jews to this country since 1881 has made necessary various plans for their welfare, of which that for their distribution throughout the country should receive hearty encouragement.





TILLING THE SOIL

*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, near Doylestown, Pa.*



POTATO DIGGERS AT WORK

*Jewish Agricultural Settlement, near Alliance, N. J.*



**XII**

**RURAL SETTLEMENTS**

## RURAL SETTLEMENTS

### (A) EASTERN STATES

#### THE SOUTH JERSEY COLONIES

The southern part of New Jersey contains vast stretches of stunted pine and scrub oak. Traveling from Camden over the West Jersey and Seashore Railroad one soon comes into the heart of this region, the home of the garter snake and the hare. The silence of the tangled plain is unbroken save for the woodman's axe and the noise of the passing trains. Occasionally isolated farms and small villages come into view, and as they are passed the struggling vegetation again stands out against the arching sky. The train rushes on to the coast, but before the song of the ocean is heard many a mile of bushland must be passed. In the winter and in the early spring the piercing northern winds find little to stay their course; they wail and bluster among the helpless pines; they sing their sombre song down the chimney until one feels chilly and sad. In the late spring and summer the skies are sunny and mild; there is the briny flavor of the ocean in the air, the breeze laden with memories of the sea is tender and caressing. But for the inexorable mosquito one could wish for no kinder starry nights, with their fragrance, their indefinite noises, and their passing music. Then come those incomparable autumn evenings whose coolness does not chill one, but the warm, moist breath of the sea fills the heart with dreams and contentment. The same moon that smiles on the ocean and plays with its waves raises misty shapes over the sandy plain, listens to the song of the whip-poor-will, and to the stridulous unceasing music of the cricket hosts. Such is the region where Russian Jews have sought to gain a livelihood from a not over-rich soil.

The first attempts at colonization in South Jersey date back to the early eighties of the nineteenth century. With an enthusiasm that often amounted to a creed, men from

different walks of life worked side by side, dreaming of the regeneration of a race too long excluded from the field and the forest. Alliance, Carmel, Rosenhayn, and finally Woodbine grew up and led an existence unique in the history of the race. Had the land been more responsive there would have been fewer neglected acres; as it is the many flourishing farms conquered from the wilderness by Jewish hands bear witness that from among the exiles from Russia there were men of earnest and steadfast purpose who shrunk from no hardship. Many years of self-denial and of unceasing toil have borne their fruit, and while one rejoices with those who succeeded, one cannot help thinking regretfully of those who found themselves compelled to give up the unequal struggle, and returned to the city and the tenement house.

The spring of 1882 marked the arrival of the first Jewish settlers in South Jersey. In the place now called Alliance twenty-five families undertook to do the pioneer work of the settlement. The tract of land, comprising eleven hundred acres, was purchased for the purpose by the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society. It was for the most part a wilderness of bushland, and the few small areas that showed signs of a once attempted cultivation had again returned to their primitive state. Alliance is located in Pittsgrove township, county of Salem. It is thirty-three miles from Philadelphia, as the crow flies, rather less than five miles from Vineland, about nine miles from Millville, and almost ten miles from Bridgeton. Carmel and Rosenhayn, situated within a few miles of Alliance, were founded in 1883; the former by Michael Heilprin, the latter by the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society. Carmel and Rosenhayn are both situated in Cumberland county, the one between Millville and Bridgeton, the other between Bridgeton and Alliance. Finally in 1891, the Woodbine colony was founded by the Baron de Hirsch Fund. Woodbine is in Cape May county, fifty-six miles from Camden and twenty-five miles from Cape May City. Within nine miles of Woodbine is Sea Isle City, and Ocean City is sixteen miles distant. The early days of Alliance, Carmel, Rosenhayn, and even Woodbine had many features in common. They needed all the enthusiasm and determination of the would-be farmers, for it soon became evident that there were almost innumerable difficulties before them. The land had to be cleared and made fit to receive the seed, and months were to pass before

any returns could be expected. Meanwhile they were obliged to live in barns or in over-crowded houses. Provisions were scarce, the roads were poor. In Alliance the colonists lived during the first year on \$8 to \$12 a month given to them by the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society. In Carmel and Rosenhayn they found what work they could with the neighboring farmers or secured tailoring work from the city. In Woodbine they were more fortunate in that there was enough to do for everybody in clearing a part of the fifty-three hundred acre tract of land, digging cellars, cutting out streets, building roads, and the like. It was hard work, especially for those not used to outdoor life. Yet with all the privations of overcrowded quarters, unsatisfactory food, and lack of warm clothing in the winter months, few complaints were heard. The work on the wind-swept plain was hard, but the management paid living wages and the colonists bore their hardships cheerfully. However, there came a time in the life of Woodbine — as it did with Carmel, Alliance, and Rosenhayn, — when the future seemed full of gloom. When the poor, wild soil did not yield what it could not yield, when willing hands failed to find work that would help fill the bread basket, and when the aid of charity had to be invoked; then there was but little sunshine to cheer the dismal gloom. And the colonists had reason to feel discouraged. Theirs was a thin, shifting soil, which ages ago had been sorted and re-sorted by the waves, and the ocean was chary about leaving it little besides the rounded grains of quartz which compose 98 per cent. of the soil. Long years of hopeless toil, theirs and their children's, were before them, and after all that work honestly and conscientiously performed what would they have? Unlike the fertile plains of the northwest, or the *Tchernosyem* of southern Russia, these South Jersey soils call for the application of manures or of commercial fertilizers, and without them they yield scarcely anything. But even with these in their possession the colonists were at a disadvantage. The use of artificial manures requires considerably more knowledge of the soil and of soil conditions than where none are used. The colonists had not that knowledge, nor the knowledge of market conditions in the large cities, or even adequate local markets. Yet if the South Jersey colonies are to attain prosperity as agricultural colonies, or if they are to retain that measure of prosperity which they have already achieved, they must have



local markets. It will be shown below that such markets can be had. As to the New York and Philadelphia markets, the colonists found that their produce had to compete with the harvests of the alluvial soils of the east and the south, and the owners of these soils had the experience, the means, and the favorable railroad rates that the South Jersey settlers did not possess. The survival of the four colonies is due to the establishment of factories. In Alliance a cigar factory and later a shirt factory were in operation during the early years. In Carmel and Rosenhayn, the shirt, wrapper, and clothing factories which were in operation at one time or another made possible the agricultural development that has taken place. In Woodbine the establishment of a village and factories was provided for by the founders. Men with large families could send some of their members to the factory while the others worked on the farm; men of small families could sell their produce to those who had none.

The men who came to live in the South Jersey colonies hailed from many parts of European Russia. Poland and Great Russia were well represented, but the greatest number came from South Russia — such as Bessarabia, Podolia, Volhynia, Kiev. Their antecedents were as different as their birth-places. There were among them men who had farmed to some extent in Russia. There were those who had lived in villages and traded there and had become familiar with farming life. There were skilled laborers and small shop-keepers. Among the younger men there were also a few who had enjoyed some educational advantages and were carried to the settlements by their enthusiasm, the desire to help the return of the Jew to agricultural life. This heterogeneous mass, coming as it did from many places, and from different stations in life, was made homogeneous by a common purpose. The early days of the colonies, with their communal life, were marked with a feeling of solidarity. Even the most ignorant settler was not a stranger to the sentiment of a common purpose. In every colony early provision was made for public buildings, and the synagogue and the public school rose side by side. Notwithstanding the similar conditions of settlement, the three older colonies soon came to have very distinctive peculiarities. Alliance from the first devoted more time to agriculture; the appearance of its people, their mode of living, showed the farmer; while in Carmel and Rosenhayn the

greater predominance of the tailoring trades showed itself in the physique and to some extent in the radical views that one finds among the factory employees in the East Side of New York.

The life in the South Jersey colonies has produced a visible effect on their inhabitants. It has influenced the thought and action of the older people, it has molded the character and the ways of the young. It offers to both advantages which would not be at their disposal in a large city. Of the settlers in Woodbine seventy-five per cent. own their homes, as do one-half of those in Rosenhayn. The factory life for those who are obliged to work in the factory is not as injurious to health as in the large cities, for the ventilation is better, the space allotted to each is greater, the light and sunshine have more easy access. The relations between employer and employee are more personal, the individual is a more important part of the population and his direct participation in communal affairs reacts favorably on him. If there are no rich men in the colonies, there are also no poor — poor as measured by the standards of the New York Ghetto. The neighbors know one another and are always willing to help those who are less fortunate than themselves. But above all there are the great advantages to the young. The young lungs expand freely in the bracing air; the young eyes roam freely over the wide expanse of field and forest; the young legs run as they will. With the free skies above them, with a healthy home atmosphere surrounding them, with the duties of citizenship instilled into them, and the love for their country growing with them as they grow, they are laying the foundations for normal and useful membership in society. Should the time come when they shall long for a wider sphere of activity than their native village affords, they can go forth equipped in strength and vitality.

With all these advantages there are conditions which place the colonists at a great disadvantage. Those of their number who work in the factory have a very limited field of employment. When the house becomes too small for the farmer he must get along as best he can; when the factory in which his children are employed is idle he is often obliged to run into debt. When his children grow up and find no congenial occupation in the small village they leave him to go to the city to live among strangers and to be exposed to its many temptations. When the crops fail

he often finds himself obliged to sell his horse or his cow, and must at times walk miles in order to reach the nearest store or the post-office. He has not as many creature comforts as his city cousin, nor has he his discomforts.

Local differences occur in the soils of Alliance, Carmel, Rosenhayn, and Woodbine, but on the whole, they belong to the same type of soils with a common geological history. The prevailing type is a sandy soil to sandy loam with a clayey to gravelly sub-soil. The underdrainage is excellent and the upper soil, being light and porous, is seldom in danger of becoming waterlogged. Thanks to the splendid underdrainage and openness, the soil is mellow and warm and admirably adapted for the raising of early truck and berries. On the other hand, it is more liable to suffer and actually does suffer in dry seasons for lack of moisture, because of its slight waterholding power. Such is not the case with the heavier soils of North Jersey. Owing to its lightness and shifting character, the surface soil is apt to be blown away by the strong winds in winter and spring. For this reason it is best not to plow the land in the fall and to keep it covered with some crop during the winter.

The crops raised in the colonies for the local and more distant markets are berries and grapes, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and fruit. These are the more important crops, and many other crops are raised to a slighter extent. The South Jersey peaches are famed for their delicious flavor; Vineland peaches always find ready buyers, and the Woodbine peaches are fully as good. Then there are sweet potatoes, which have not their equal outside of New Jersey, and they command a correspondingly higher price in the market. The farmers in the colonies raise large quantities of berries, notably strawberries. Part of these are made into wine and have a limited but appreciative circle of patrons. Grape wine is produced in large quantity, particularly in Alliance. Many gallons are sold in New York and Philadelphia, the greater part to supply the Passover trade. It is claimed by competent judges that some of the port wine from the South Jersey colonies is superior to that from California.

In the spring of 1900 a canning factory was established in Alliance. Its short career has already demonstrated its great usefulness and the results that may be expected. There have been canned strawberries, blackberries, cherries, pears, apples, peaches, plums, beans, peas, beets, tomatoes,



sweet potatoes, and in smaller quantity, grapes, corn, citrons, huckleberries, cranberries, and gooseberries. The Allvine Company, which owns the canning factory, is also trying to give object lessons on its own farm, and has established lecture courses on agricultural topics. The Jewish farmers thus find a local market for their produce, are rendered independent of the commission merchant in the city, who is at times unscrupulous, and are, moreover, instructed in the proper methods of farming.

Dairying has been receiving considerable attention. The milk produced is sold in the local markets at satisfactory prices. Bridgeton, Vineland, and Millville are convenient markets for the three older colonies, while the milk produced in Woodbine is sold in the village of Woodbine itself, and to a slight extent at the seashore resorts. The dairy of the Baron de Hirsch Agricultural School, conducted according to the most modern methods, and producing milk of the finest quality, tried to run a milk wagon to Ocean City. The milk was in large demand, but the distance was too great and injurious to the horses, and it was therefore decided to dispose of the milk in Woodbine itself. There is no doubt, however, that the several dairymen in Woodbine could combine to establish a milk depot in Ocean City, shipping their milk by rail.

There are, probably, about 4,000 acres under cultivation in the colonies. In the three older settlements there are about 1,100 acres under field crops, 600 acres under truck, 550 acres under berries, and 250 acres under grapes. Of the three, Alliance is by far the most prosperous, and agriculturally the most important. Thus, the value of the Rosenhayn farms, with a total acreage of 1,800, is only about \$60,000, whereas that of the Alliance farms, with a total acreage of some 1,700, is about \$135,000; and the value of the products sold from the Alliance farms was greater than that of the others put together.

The colonies have not had a continuous growth. Periods of comparative prosperity alternated with periods of depression, depending largely upon the condition of the factories. Woodbine, like the rest, had its periods of depression; nevertheless, its growth has been more steady, and to-day it has a population of about 2,500 persons, while Alliance, Carmel, and Rosenhayn (including Carton Road), taken together, have a population of somewhat about 1,000,



and this, notwithstanding that they were founded nine years before Woodbine.

The original 25 families that came to Alliance in 1882 were joined by others until there were in all 67 families in the place. As the hardships increased, many became discouraged and by 1884 only 50 families remained. At this critical time aid was extended to the colonists, and the condition of the colony improved perceptibly. The crop returns gave additional encouragement leading to the increase of the cultivated area. In 1889 the total population was 529, and it has remained about the same. In 1889 the farmers owned 1,400 acres of land, of which 889 were under cultivation; in 1901 they owned 1,702 acres, of which 1,379 were under cultivation. These few figures indicate clearly enough that those of the Alliance settlers who remained on their farms gradually added to their holdings, and have extended their agricultural holdings.

In Carmel there were 16 families that came out in 1882; seven of these left in discouragement; others came to take their places, and the population changed from time to time until in 1889 there were 286 persons in the place. To the original tract of 848 acres 1,500 were added in 1889, and 36 new houses were erected. There are now about 600 persons. In 1889 there were 124 acres cleared; now more than 700.

In Rosenhayn there were 6 families in 1883. In 1889 there were 67 families, containing 294 persons. They owned 1,912 acres, of which 261 were under cultivation. The number of persons has not increased much. In 1901 they owned 1,862 acres, of which 662 were cleared.

In the late summer of 1891 a few men stepped from the train on the old wooden platform of the Woodbine station, located on the West Jersey Railroad. These were the vanguard of the settlers. There was not much to greet them. Three old dwellings stood along the Dennisville road, quite near the station; beyond and around them were the darkening woods. Save for the broad avenue along which their train was even then speeding towards the end of the Cape there was scarcely a dozen square rods free from the untamed oak and pine. As one looks from the new station platform over the hundreds of cottages, at the row of busy factories, and the straight streets with their poplars and maples, he would not recognize the wilderness of thirteen years ago. This is the industrial Woodbine, forming the nucleus

around which are clustered about 50 farms. The growth of the village has depended entirely on the growth of its industries, and the activity of the farmers has been regulated by the local market. Of the public buildings in Woodbine there are the Woodbine Central School building, which is used for municipal, educational and social purposes, and the synagogue. Near by is the Talmud Torah (Hebrew school). A Baptist church has been converted into a synagogue. Woodbine has the distinction of having established the first kindergarten in the county. Of the 250 houses in the village, nearly all are owned by the inhabitants. Twenty miles of streets have been laid out and partly graded; 12 miles of farm roads have been built, an electric light plant and pumping station have been established, a volunteer fire brigade has been organized. There are a large hotel in the village, three public schools besides the central school, a public bath house, a meeting hall, and two parks reserved from the forest area. The 50 families that came in 1891 increased in number by the influx of new arrivals until now there are about 2,500. Five building and loan associations have invested thousands of dollars in Woodbine real estate, thus proving their confidence in its stability and prosperity.

Throughout the colonies the mercantile pursuits that have arisen are rather insignificant. Grocery stores and meat markets have been started. Shoe stores, clothing stores, bakeries, and the like have been established to supply local needs. As a possible exception it may be admitted that some stores in Woodbine sometimes serve to supply the needs of neighboring villages. Moreover, the brick yard in Woodbine sells bricks outside of the village, and considerable quantities of cord wood are sold from Woodbine to the Millville, Vineland and other glass factories.

Recent statistics show that there are a considerable number of factories in the colonies. Alliance has a cloak factory and a canning factory; Rosenhayn has a clothing factory and a brick yard, and manufactures to some extent tinware and hoisery. Carmel has a clothing factory, and two others where ladies' waists and wrappers are manufactured. Woodbine has a clothing factory, a machine and tool plant, a hat factory, a shirt factory, a small cigar factory, a knit-goods factory, an establishment for making driven well points, and a brick yard.

As compared to the dormant existence of the small vil-

lages in South Jersey, the Jewish colonies are wide awake and progressive. There is a greater range of social questions discussed there. There is the consciousness of common aims. Political clubs, social clubs, literary societies, military organizations, benevolent organizations have been established, and many are contributing to a better and broader life. Though most of the voters have been naturalized in recent years they display an intelligent interest in national as well as in local politics. It may sound strange, yet it is true, that, unlike their neighbors, they consider national and international affairs above the local affairs. This seems to be characteristic of the Jew. He watches with deep concern the happenings in various countries, as if he felt himself a citizen of the whole world. World politics, the events which concern all men, are to him of paramount interest. It may be that his long wanderings have taught him to assume this mental attitude. It may be that this habit of thought is inherent in him, yet the visitor to Woodbine, for instance, can convince himself of the truth of the above observation. On a Saturday afternoon he will find the older people of the village gathered in the post-office or in the railroad station warmly discussing the happenings in Germany, France, or Russia. The sewing machine, the plow, or the lathe are forgotten for the moment. Dressed in his Sabbath clothes and wrapped in the Sabbath mood, he looks into the outside world and judges it according to his light. The Jewish newspaper informs him in Yiddish of the doings outside his own narrow sphere of activity and with this information as a basis he indulges in endless discussion.

It is otherwise with his children. Growing up as they do under freer skies, they imbibe something of the new spirit. The old traditions are not as infallible to them as to their fathers and their thoughts wander in other directions. For them the English newspaper replaces the Yiddish, the school history is a greater authority than oral tradition. And yet they are not altogether unmindful of this tradition. They stand between the old and the new. They are in a transition stage, and they partake of what their fathers are, and also of what their own children will be. They are Americans, with a touch of the foreign spirit still clinging to them, but somehow they do not seem to be the worse for it. Their home life is healthy, there is no viciousness, and little disobedience to established authority. They are fond of dancing, of private theatricals, and of social gatherings in gen-

eral. The factory atmosphere is often reflected in their mode of thought. It is no rare occurrence to see boys of fifteen or sixteen discussing in all seriousness some question in sociology, or political economy, of which they know little or nothing.

Most of the factories are closed on Saturday. The elders solemnly repair to the synagogue and as solemnly return when the services are over. The village is in a Sabbath spirit, peaceful yet joyous. When evening comes there is usually some entertainment.

Theft and drunkenness are practically unknown in the colonies, although wine and beer are consumed in considerable quantities. But there are features which are less fortunate and not at all commendable. One comes across ignorance and narrowness, stubbornness of spirit and uncleanness of person. Yet even these are not as frequent as they used to be. But there is one feature that deserves mention — this is the neighborly spirit, and the true charity that the colonists display. Quietly, unostentatiously, they help one another, often sharing the last crust of bread. When the severe winter days come, men often walk a long distance to cut some fire wood for a sick neighbor; women frequently walk for miles through the snow in order to bring food or money to a needy individual. The women in Woodbine have organized a Woman's Aid Society and the good work it is doing deserves commendation. Those who are inclined to accuse the Russian Jew of unwillingness to work, and of dependence upon charity, will find upon visiting the South Jersey colonies, only peaceful and industrious people always ready to work. There are no loafers, no tramps, no gamblers.

The colonists spend a considerable portion of their income on public buildings. They have their lodges, circulating libraries, evening schools, lecture courses and the like, and this healthy social and home life speaks well for the individuals and the community.

The many vicissitudes through which the colonists have passed have left their mark. Some of the earlier settlers have returned to the city population, and in their leisure moments recount perhaps the hardships which confronted them. It is for them to decide whether they acted wisely. But those who stayed have continued to do their work. They have not attained great wealth, nor great fame, but they have lived and honestly earned their bread.



Let those who have so generously worked to found the colonies remember that the mere withdrawing of people from the tenement districts in the great cities and their settling in the country is in itself a worthy work, and if there should be ten per cent., or even one per cent. of these settlers who entirely depend on farming, the work remains worthy. Let the colonies have more factories. The farmers will take care of themselves, and the greater the local demand for their produce, the greater will be the area under cultivation. If the liberal policy of inducing reliable manufacturers to establish themselves in Woodbine is continued by the Trustees of the Baron de Hirsch Fund there is little doubt that the next ten years will see considerable growth.

The experience of years brought out quite clearly the fact that it is practically impossible in many instances to convert a small trader into a farmer. The ancestral conditions and the habits of a lifetime cannot be changed at a moment's notice. Earnest as is the purpose of the would-be farmer, and great as is his determination, he very often finds himself obliged to admit that the opportunity has come to him too late in life. The occupation of a lifetime has unfitted him for farming. With this experience in mind the founders of the Baron de Hirsch Agricultural School at Woodbine have formulated a plan for the education of the children of immigrant Jews. In the few years of its existence the school has given ample proof of its usefulness. It aims to give its pupils a practical, agricultural education, in order that the graduates may (after an apprenticeship of some years with practical farmers) be competent to manage farms of their own. The school has now about 120 pupils, of whom about ten per cent. are girls. Theoretical instruction in the class-room is given together with practical work on the school farms, in the dairy, blacksmith shop, poultry houses, green houses, etc.

Independently of the Woodbine school, an agricultural school has been established at Doylestown, Pa. The curriculum is somewhat different from that of the Woodbine school, but its aim, as in the other case, is primarily the instruction of the children of immigrants in the arts of husbandry.

The work of these two institutions is watched with deep interest. The visitor to the schools, as he sees the boys working in the fields, or as he watches them in their moments of recreation, rushing a foot ball against the opposing line, or

running on a base ball field, can not but feel glad and hopeful. He remembers the stooping, narrow-chested men in the crowded thoroughfares, he remembers the long centuries of artificial Ghetto life, and he rejoices for those who shall grow broad of shoulder and brawny of arm, who shall have laughter in their eyes, who shall contribute as great a share to the physical work of the world as has been contributed by their race to the mental and the spiritual life.

#### THE NEW ENGLAND FARMS

Individual Jewish farmers are scattered through the New England states, and own farms in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire. By far the greater number are located in Connecticut, and they form the most important section of the Jewish farming community in New England. The first settlement dates back to 1891, when a Jewish family, having saved some money by work in a New England mill, purchased a farm near New London, Connecticut. The gregarious instincts of the race, and particularly the desire for adequate religious life, led this family to exert itself in inducing friends and relatives to establish themselves in the neighborhood. In 1892 a creamery was erected by the Baron de Hirsch Fund, and new settlers established themselves in the vicinity of New London, Oakdale, Palmerton, Chesterfield, and Salem. In 1893 a number of Russian Jews employed in the woolen mills, then in operation in Colchester, invested their savings in the purchase of farms in the neighborhood. Having had experience with dairy farming in Russia, they found it more profitable to devote themselves to dairy farming on their new lands. Most of these settled in New London County and also in the neighboring counties of Middlesex and Hartford. Some farmers also located about eight miles from Bridgeport and New Haven. These two cities are excellent markets for dairy products, and but for the great cost of land near the cities the settlers would have established themselves nearer to the market towns.

The position of the Jewish farmers in New England is quite different from that of the colonists in South Jersey. The character of their land, their methods of farming, the market conditions are all different. Yet the greatest distinction is due to their comparative isolation from their co-religionists. They do not have distinct Jewish agricultural

colonies like those in New Jersey; they bought farms where they could get them, and are therefore surrounded in most cases by Yankee neighbors. These played a momentous part in molding the farming life of the Jewish settlers. The latter had many difficulties to contend with. Beginning with limited means and a limited knowledge of their environment they were placed at a still greater disadvantage by the exhausted condition of their land; because of their comparatively small means they found themselves obliged to purchase some of the so-called "abandoned farms." These are farms which had been treated carelessly and unscientifically for generations until their productivity was so reduced as to render them unprofitable for further cultivation. In many cases their owners found themselves compelled to sell them for a much smaller price than the cost of the buildings alone. It is evident that the improvement and the profitable cultivation of such exhausted land requires the unceasing work and care of years. The fact that 90 per cent. of the Jewish farmers remain on their lands speaks much in their favor. Notwithstanding their limited capital, their insufficient knowledge, and the poverty of the land, they gradually accustomed themselves to their new surroundings, adapted themselves to the ways of their Yankee neighbors, and are now successfully pursuing their new vocation. The friendship and advice of these neighbors help them at critical moments, and it was the children who in many instances threw the parents together, for the Jewish children soon learned to know their schoolmates and formed friendships which grew until they included the parents.

Dairy farming is the occupation of most of the New England settlers. It is peculiarly adapted to their land and has been productive of greater profit than market gardening or fruit growing. In dairy farming but little of the fertility of the soil is sold off the farm. The comparatively large number of cattle and the feeding material purchased make possible a more thorough manuring of the land than would be practicable with the same expenditure in any other kind of farming. As a result of this the New England farms are being improved gradually, and are growing more productive from year to year. Moreover dairy products find in New England a ready sale at good prices, and thus yield to the farmer almost immediate cash returns. The Jewish farmers utilize the large markets of Hartford, New London, and



Norwich for cream and butter. Large quantities of milk are sold at the creameries in Colchester and Chesterfield. The former is a very important milk centre and is situated at the end of a short branch of the air line division of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Road, and is about three miles from Turnerville, on the main line. Colchester has a separating plant which offers very good prices for milk. From 3 to 3½ cents per quart are paid there, and in the large market it is sold according to the market quotations.

The Jewish farmers realize the value of modern methods. They are careful, in many instances, to select the very best cows that they can get. They have built a number of silos for the preservation of corn. They follow the instructions of their experiment station officers in regard to the compounding of rations for their cattle. On many farms the equipment is still incomplete, but the officers of the Jewish Agricultural and Aid Society have taken an active interest in the affairs of the Jewish farmers and are not backward in extending aid and encouragement where they are needed most.

Like the colonists in South Jersey, the Jewish farmers in New England had various occupations in Europe. Most of them, however, were either artisans or petty traders. Men with large families were more certain of success, for at the beginning at least they were obliged to look for a part of their income to the mill or factory. The enthusiasm that marked the early days of the South Jersey colonies was not lacking here. The farmers went to work and bore their hardships bravely. They seemed to have imbibed something of the spirit of their Yankee neighbors, for they show much self-reliance and independence of character. In their religious life they are as a rule orthodox and provide for the instruction of their children in Hebrew and Jewish history. There is also a measure of social life, particularly during the holidays. Their relations with one another are friendly, and they represent on the whole an intelligent portion of the Russian immigrants.

Most of the farms were purchased by the settlers at two-thirds the original costs of the buildings. The purchase price varied from \$1,200 to \$1,500 with an immediate cash payment of one-third to one-half the purchase price. The houses are in most cases frame buildings, and the farms are supplied with the necessary outbuildings. The land is roll-



ing or hilly, and the soil is gravelly or loamy. Although the most important branch of agriculture that is followed is dairy farming, they also engage in truck farming, grain growing, poultry keeping, and fruit growing. A beginning has been made in the construction and management of green houses. A number of farmers have purchased incubators, and are raising chickens for the market. Like their Yankee neighbors, they derive an important part of their income from summer boarders. Many Jewish people from New York and Boston prefer to board with Jewish farmers in New England, because of the kosher board that can be secured. This "agricultural industry," if it may be called such, offers the additional advantage to the farmers that they have a home market for the products of their farms. The canning of tomatoes has also been started at Colchester, and gives promise of greater development. The Jewish farmers of New England utilize their grapes for wine making and in some cases earn a little money in lumbering and the cutting of railroad ties. The children of a number of the farmers work in the small mills near Oakdale, Norwich, and Palmerton, and thus contribute something to the resources of their families. Yet the New England farmers depend upon the factories but to a limited extent, and these do not play the important part in their life that they do in the life of the South Jersey colonists.

There are probably about 400 Jewish farmers in the New England states. The farms average about 100 acres each, and the total acreage is therefore about 40,000. On the average there are probably ten head of cattle on each farm, and enough horses to do the farm work. The Jewish farmers are gradually paying off their obligations and improving their holdings. Their future in New England has much promise.

## (B) WESTERN STATES

In describing the condition of the Jewish farmers located in the north-western states of the Union as observed by the writer, who, accompanied by Mr. William Kahn, of the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society, of New York, visited the homes of a large number of these people during the summer of 1903, more than a mere narrative to gratify the curious is intended. How the Jew lives and works as an agriculturalist in America must be of the deepest interest to every well-meaning and earnest Jew and Jewess. For, however favorable the "chances" city life offers to the poor Jewish immigrant from Russia and Roumania to rise from a peddler to an importer or from a sweat-shop operator to a manufacturer, it is the farm that holds the true key to a difficult situation. Less than a decade or two ago it seems to have been a conviction with even the best of our people that the city offers larger opportunities for the immigrant Jew. Here, it was held, he can lift himself into prominence by means of the industries. The educational institutions, too, it was held, will develop the talents of his children; his son may become a lawyer, physician, or a professor; his daughter may attend the university and become learned in the classics, or she may become an artist, a vocalist, or a pianist. These "chances" are good in the city, while on the farm the Jew will drop out from the world's noticing eye and become, at best, a producer of the plain Irish potato and the artless yellow pumpkin. Such argument seems to have been convincing to many not very long ago. But there is "not the ill wind which blows no man good." The heavier Jewish immigration to the United States caused a wiser attitude. The newer condition as it developed among the Jews living in the congested quarters in the larger cities has taken off the sharp edge of the "chance-in-the-city" argument and the advisability of having the Jewish poor apply themselves to agriculture is no longer questioned by any thinking Jew.

But while the advisability of bringing the Jew to farm-

ing is generally acceded, the feasibility of such a movement is still an open question with many. Can and will the Jew make a successful farmer is a question of more than passing concern to those who, much as they would assist in the movement, cannot bring themselves to believe that the Jew is capable of making farming a successful calling. It is, therefore, for the purpose of forcing home the conviction of the Jew's willingness and ability to till the soil that the following facts and figures concerning the Jewish farmers are given publicly. What is told of conditions is the statement of an eye-witness, what is drawn and concluded by inference is based on years of experience in the work of assisting Jewish poor to make farming their calling, and what is given as impressions is the result of careful study and close observation among these farmers in their own homes and surroundings.

Before relating, however, what was seen and learned on these visits to the various farmers in Dakota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana and Illinois, it is deemed proper — and it will surely prove news to many — to state that, most conservatively estimated, there are more than one thousand Jewish farmers located in the territory west of the Alleghenys and east of the Rocky Mountains. With nearly three hundred of these Jewish farmers the Jewish Agriculturists' Aid Society of America (whose office is in Chicago) is more or less in constant touch. These farmers are engaged exclusively in agriculture; no other industry is followed by them save what comes within the sphere of their calling. They are actively engaged in all forms of the work; from gardening and dairy farming near the cities in Illinois to wheat farming and cattle raising in the Dakotas; from truck farming in Florida to diversified farming in Indiana and Wisconsin; from fruit farming in Michigan to cotton raising in Oklahoma. They were all, at the outset, unfamiliar with the work of farming as it is carried on in this country, but, thanks to their untiring energy, they have succeeded — some most admirably, others quite satisfactorily — in their undertaking. There can be little doubt as to the ultimate success of these willing workers, among whom, more than anything else, is manifest a spirit of great contentment and a true delight in their new calling.

After a forty hours' trip from Chicago by way of St. Paul and Bismarek to Wilton, North Dakota, we left the railroad and started on a tour through the country. Going

eighteen miles northwest of Wilton we came to the farm of L. C. This farmer is one of the latest arrivals in North Dakota, he having come out from New York with his wife and eight children at the end of last year. He is located, like all our farmers in Dakota, on a homestead of 160 acres, and though this is his first summer on a farm he has made considerable improvement on the place. He has broken 35 acres of land, 32 of which he has put in flax and the balance in corn, potatoes and garden stuff. He has the assistance of a son, eighteen years of age, and a younger daughter, who, like Whittier's "Maud Muller" does not shun raking the hay on a hot summer day. On our arrival at the farm we found these two young people in the field "haying"; the son on the mower, and the girl on the hay rack, and they were at it with a readiness as if they had been accustomed to it from early childhood. The father was busy putting a curbing in the well, and was assisted by one of his younger children. Another one of his boys was herding the cows. The best help, however, this man has is his good wife. Her hand is visible in every part of the home. The modest dwelling they erected was yet incompleated. It was in a condition to afford shelter for the summer but not for winter. In spite of its incompleteness the house was arranged to afford the best comfort to the large family of ten people that occupies it. Both husband and wife are appreciative of the situation. They know that there is great work before them, but they are ready for it, and the satisfaction they expressed at having reached even this state in their undertaking, their hopefulness for the future, and the cheerfulness with which they and their children are at their work, augurs well for their success. They are the people who indeed will succeed. An incident which occurred while we were at the house of this family deserves special mention. It illustrates the good quality of the people; a quality essential in the character of those Jews who desire to build up their homes and establish themselves as agriculturists. The C. family, prior to making their homestead entry, conducted a grocery store on the East Side in New York City. Among the relics of that time is a photograph showing the whole family arrayed in all the pomp and finery becoming the position of an East Side grocery merchant. On that photograph the father appears with a heavy watch chain, the mother with her earrings and finger rings, while the children are bedecked with laces and ribbons in great profusion.



Noticing this family picture we ventured to remark on the fine appearance of the family, and suggested that here on the farm such finery will hardly be appreciated, as there are so few people to notice it. In answer to our remark the woman said: "We are glad we shall not need it. There in New York we worked for the dress and nothing more, here we dress to work and work for a home."

About four miles from this farm are located the homesteads of T. and I. K., father and son. They entered on their homesteads a few months before our visit. They also came from New York, where the other members of the family—mother and children—were left. Having come to their farms at the early spring, they had to go to land-breaking and hence could not build their home so as to enable them to bring the family to the farm. On our arrival at their "shack," we found them preparing for haying. They had built a stable, dug a well and cellar, and the material for their dwelling was on the place ready to be put up as soon as time would permit them to do so. In the field they had done good work. They had broken 40 acres of land, seeded it in flax, which was in an excellent state. The "breaking" which was done by the son, an ex-cloak maker, showed that it did not take the young man much time to learn how to guide the plow. The acreage worked indicated that the work, so well done, was accomplished in a reasonably quick time. Speaking with this family of the change they had made and of the many hardships they had already endured, and which they will still have to endure before they will be able to have their family comfortably housed on the farm, they expressed their absolute confidence in the future, asserted that they will shun no work and mind no difficulty in carrying out their intention of making the homesteads in reality what they were now but in name.

From here we drove eight miles, south by east, passing the homesteads of J. M. and M. Z., whom we expected to meet at the farm of M. brothers, the place of our destination. The M. brothers' farm, with its large dwelling house, stables and outhouses, its live stock of nine horses, five cows, and as many calves, makes an attractive showing. The dwelling house is situated on a somewhat elevated place and is visible from quite a distance. As we drew near we noticed the cattle in the pasture, the light green fields of young grain and the darker green of the young flax stretch-

ing before us in large patches, the whole forming a picture indicating life, human energy, and intelligent activity.

The brothers M. are Roumanians who came to this country within the last few years. One of them came to America during the early part of 1899, and the other two followed him a year later. To a limited extent they followed agriculture in their native home, but, here in America they, like most of the newcomers from Russia, Roumania and Galicia, went to the city — Chicago, in this instance — where they found the usual employment in the sweat-shop and in the picture frame factory. Accustomed to rural life and to work in the open air they could not well bear the change the new condition imposed upon them. Especially did the wife of the oldest brother suffer by this change. She could not endure the life in the congested quarters in the city and fell sick. Learning of the work of the Jewish Agriculturists' Aid Society of America, these people, together with Max Z., a brother of the wife of one of the M.'s and a young man of exceptionally fine physique, made application for a loan to enable them to take up the work of farming. Their application received favorable consideration at the hands of the directors of the society and loans aggregating the sum of \$2,000 were granted to them. They located on homesteads in Burleigh County, North Dakota, and though this was their first season on their homesteads they were already well established. They have over eighty acres under cultivation on their various homesteads. Most of the acreage is seeded in flax with every prospect of a good yield. On one of the homesteads they built a commodious six-room house, on the other a large barn, and with the smaller buildings on the other homesteads, cellar, stable and sheds, their improvements in this respect represent a value of twelve hundred dollars or more. Their live stock is worth more than one thousand dollars, and with wagons, harness, buggy and other implements they offer ample security for the money loaned to them. More than this security, however, must be counted their eagerness and ability to improve their estates.

Our next stopping place was at the farm of V. B. We arrived here after dark and were cordially greeted by Mr. and Mrs. B., who expressed their delight at the opportunity of having us stay at their home over night. Entering the house we found that our hosts had already some company. Two boys, sons of one of the Jewish farmers in the neigh-

borhood, were here. Their father had purchased a cow and a calf from a farmer a few miles away, and the boys were on their way home with the purchase. They had yet about six miles to their home, and turned in here for the night, expecting to start again on their journey with the break of day. Expressing our doubt as to the ability of our hosts to shelter so many guests in their home, we were assured that there was plenty of room for all. It was, indeed, pleasing to note with what cheerfulness the hospitality was extended; a cheerfulness which partook of a sense of thankfulness to Divine Providence for having granted the blessings that made possible the hospitality.

For the first three years on their homesteads the occupants lived in a sod-house erected by their own hands, which afforded them a mere shelter. They did bide their time, and in 1902 were able to build for themselves a modest but comfortable home. They look with just pride on the work they have accomplished. They have one of the finest quarter-sections in the township. Sixty-five acres of this they have under cultivation. They have eight milch-cows, three heifers and calves, five horses and a colt, besides all the machinery and implements. They are indebted, all told, to the amount of a little over \$1,000, but their estate is worth to-day three times that amount, and the money they owe is well secured. Five years ago these people arrived here in Chicago from Russia. The man went to work in a sweat-shop, earning from six to seven dollars a week. He soon learned that the conditions in the city were not promising for him, and he applied for a loan in order to take up a homestead of free government land. At first a loan of \$600 was granted to him, and with that — not having a dollar of his own — he started at his venture. The family went through considerable hardship, but were not daunted.

An object lesson of how the Jew will live as a farmer was given through a slight incident which happened while we were at this farm. It has always been maintained by the writer that the Jew, with his high regard for life and his indomitable ambition to make life bright and worthy, will, when he takes to farming, broaden the view of the agriculturists and do much towards dispelling the odium which hangs on to the "hay-seed" by reason of his proverbial narrow-mindedness. While at the breakfast table in the home of our friend B., the hostess waited on us and talked to us of the future plans of the family. Among others she



stated that, if the crop turned out as expected, she could go the coming fall to Bismarek to have a tooth fixed. During the afternoon we had occasion to visit the home of a non-Jewish farmer with whom we had some dealings in the past. This farmer is an old settler and quite well-to-do. As we drove into his yard we pulled up before a low shed covered with straw, the house of this farmer. We found that our man was not at home. His wife came to the door, barefooted, and as she spoke one could not fail to notice the exceedingly bad condition of her teeth. This made a decided impression, and a thought not unfamiliar came forcibly upon us. Here was an old settled farmer whose possessions were worth ten times as much as those of his Jewish neighbor, housed in a one-room shed, compared with which the house of our friend B. is a veritable palace. The Jewish farmer's wife having one defective tooth is ready to have it attended to, while the wife of the other, if not wholly ignorant of the existence of the dentist, seems never to have thought of availing herself of the good service of that individual. What a difference in the conception of life. Oh, for the day when the Jew will again be a farmer ! The Jewish seer's dream of beautiful homes, where every man will dwell peacefully and contentedly under his own vine and fig-tree, can best be realized through the Jewish conception of life and by the Jewish tiller of the soil. In more than one way has the Jew brought home to the world the lessons of life, teaching the way to sweeten and to beautify it.

From the V. B. farm we went to the house of H. B. This man has the distinction of being the first settler in his township. He came here from Chicago four years ago, and pitched his tent in the open country, several miles away from any neighbor. He had the choice of the best lands and he selected a fine homestead. He was, however, not long without neighbors. Within less than two years the homesteads in his township were taken, and to-day there is not an acre of free government land left unoccupied in his vicinity. We found B. in the field cutting hay. He was on the mower looking every inch a farmer. There was nothing about him which would denote the uninitiated worker. There was a fine span of horses before the machine, harnessed after the most approved farmer's style. The mower, too, though four years old, was in excellent condition—the whole outfit equal to any that can be found among the



Swedish, Norwegian, and German farmers in the vicinity. We drove along his farm looking at the crops. He had nearly one hundred acres under cultivation, forty of which were seeded in wheat and spelt, though with a poor prospect of any yield. He had, however, nigh fifty acres in flax which is in excellent condition. He had also a few acres in corn, and oats, besides potatoes, beans, beets, etc. His live-stock, consisting of seven horses and twelve head of horn cattle, we also found to be in splendid condition, and it alone easily represents a value fully covering the amount of the indebtedness of this farm.

In the extreme northern portion of McLean County, in township 150, Range 78, are located sixteen Jewish homesteaders. The homesteads are all within a radius of about twelve miles, the nearest being about eight miles from Balfour. Our first visit was to the homesteads of the R. family. This family, consisting of father, two married sons and a son-in-law, have entered on four homesteads, two of which are located together while the others are about two miles apart. Considering the short time they had been on their respective homesteads—having filed their entries the winter before—the improvements they made bear evidence not only of their willingness to work as farmers but, what is more important, of their ability to do so. They built a large barn which was serving them as shelter until the house under construction would be ready for them. They also erected stables for their cattle, dug wells, constructed cellars and made the necessary fences around their yards. They had nearly one hundred acres under cultivation, eighty of which were seeded in flax, and, they had, at the time of our visit, made nearly forty tons of hay. Their live stock consisted of eight horses, three cows, two heifers and three calves. We stayed for more than a day and had an opportunity to observe the farmers at their work. The favorable impression which we had of these people was strengthened by this observation.

From here we went about ten miles south where, in township 149, we came to the homestead of G. This settler had come out from New York with his wife and eight children during the fall of 1902. He was assisted by the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society and established himself upon a fine tract of fertile land. Though about eighteen miles away from the railroad, the homestead has been wisely chosen, it being well watered and free from

stony and alcoholated patches so often found in the prairies of the Dakotas. G. has built for himself a comfortable dwelling, a good barn and stable, and has broken over forty acres of land since he settled upon his homestead. He has four horses, two cows and two calves. He has the assistance of his eldest son, seventeen years of age, and of a good wife who looks after the comfort of her husband and children. About a mile away to the west is located a sister of Mr. G., a widow with her three children. In this vicinity also are located two young men, who, not being able to find any free government land nearer their own homes, came out further west and located in McLean County. We found them here on their claims engaged in hay-making, but who expected by the following year to begin the improvements on their homesteads as required by the law. In this connection it is also worthy of mention that six more young men, sons of Jewish farmers of Ramsey County, had the previous spring gone as far west as Ward County, and located as homesteaders. The action of these young men is a telling answer to the often repeated question, "Will the sons of our Jewish settlers stay farmers?" We had occasion to speak with these young men and from all we could ascertain we are convinced that it would require very strong inducements to bring them to live in the city. They love the country and their chosen vocation, and are on their respective homesteads to stay and work as agriculturists.

Another young man broke fifty-four acres of land during last spring. He also is the son of a farmer located in Ramsey County. The boy was about eight years of age when he came with his father to the farm. He has grown up at the work, and has now filed an entry for a homestead of his own in McLean County. He came to his homestead equipped with the necessary implements and live stock, all of which are in first-class shape and condition, and second to none that can be found in charge of any young farmer in the state. A third Jewish young boy, who two years ago, was working in a factory in Chicago, broke forty acres of land during the spring. This is excellent work for a novice. Undoubtedly the good example of his young friends, their valuable advice, and their encouraging words, have contributed no little to the success of this novice farmer. Seeing these three young men together, one could not help being thoroughly impressed with the

absurdity of the usual saw that the Jew cannot or will not make a farmer. It would be hard indeed to find in any farmer community three young men better equipped and more willing to do the work and lead the life of the farmer.

From McLean County we went by way of Minot down to St. Paul, and from there to Northern Wisconsin where we visited some of our older settlers in that vicinity. We have here some Jewish farmers who have, so to speak, grown up with the country; having purchased wild lands about ten years ago when the country was but very sparingly settled. Unfamiliar with the work they were to perform and unaccustomed to a life of such thorough seclusion as was necessarily theirs in this new country, they endured much trial and privation. However, they have suffered and labored till they have learned and succeeded, and they are to-day well established in a most fertile country, surrounded by kind and pleasant neighbors, with whom they stand on an equal footing as self-respecting producers. A more contented people than our Jewish farmers in Burron County, Wisconsin, will be hard to find anywhere, and their contentment is well founded.

We can not refrain from giving, as concisely as possible, the story of one of our families located in this vicinity. It will illustrate the possibilities farming holds for even the poorest among the poor, and will also demonstrate the fact that the means applied in helping the Jewish poor, ready and willing to work, to change the condition from poverty to affluence need be no waste of money, but an interest-bearing investment, ample and well secured. Nine years ago the family in question, consisting of husband, wife, and six children, the oldest of whom was a boy of thirteen years of age, lived in the city in dire poverty. The husband worked in a factory, earning eight dollars per week when work was plentiful. Through sickness in the family he fell back in paying the rent for his house, and within less than a year the family was evicted three times. With the assistance of the Jewish Agriculturists' Aid Society the family removed from the city to the farm. Eighty acres of wild land were purchased—title being taken in the man's name—and after the most necessary buildings had been erected on the premises, a few implements and some live stock obtained, the family was indebted to the society to the amount of over \$1,000. After the first year on the farm our friend was in a position that required



further aid from the society, and \$200 more was invested to enable the man to hold out on the farm. After the lapse of the second year the family was able to maintain itself, but was unable to pay even the few dollars of taxes levied against the property. The progress the people made during the first years on the farm was slow. The work they did was very superficial. No one could handle the tools needed on such a farm properly, and it was not until after the family had been five years on the farm that the society felt justified in purchasing suitable tools and placing them at the disposal of the people. All these years advances of various sums of money had to be made in order to help them. These sums, together with the interest of four per cent. on all amounts advanced, brought up the indebtedness of this family to nearly \$1,500. During this time, while the process of turning the Jewish family who, like other Jewish families, were not farmers, into a people of the soil, not a few insisted that the money was wasted. In fact, a gentleman who, four years ago, went out west for the purpose of visiting the Jewish farmers and investigating their condition, and who also visited the family in question, was not slow in asserting that the society is "sinking money on that farm." The society, however, disregarded these statements and went, as this society always does, the full length of its endeavor, and the desired end has been attained. The family to-day is not only in a position to make the annual payments on its indebtedness, but has already an equity of \$1,500 in the estate. Fully sixty acres of the wild lands have been cleared and the property, with the buildings on it, is marketable for \$2,500 at any time. This price has been set upon the farm by the bank at Barron, as being so reasonable that a purchaser for the property can be had for it at a day's notice. Besides the equity in the land, the family has six cows, four heifers, four steers, three calves, a fine span of horses, a farmer wagon, a light spring wagon, all the implements, among which there is a mower, a rake and binder, besides plows, harrows, etc., and a stump-puller that cost over \$100. It need hardly be added that the indebtedness of the family is now well secured and that the money invested has not been "sunk," but judiciously and advantageously applied. It should be stated, however, that while the family having learned the work, is now in a position to pay back what has been advanced on its account, it is at the



same time improving the property and within six or eight years, when the full amount of the indebtedness will have been paid, will be in possession of an estate of from six to eight thousand dollars. But while the repayment of the investment has been assured, and a nice little estate created for that poor family, the Jewish Agriculturists' Aid Society has worked for an aim by far higher than the one to which can be applied a money standard. The people have been raised from a condition of depending, cringing poverty to the dignified state of self-reliant manhood.

Numerous other instances could be given showing the satisfactory progress made by the protégés of the Jewish Agriculturists' Aid Society of America. However, the foregoing descriptions fully suffice to point the great lesson which American Jewry must, of sheer necessity, learn and take to heart. Nor can it be overlooked that the success attained by these Jewish farmers is due to their own efforts and to the readiness and willingness with which they undertook the work. True, they had to be assisted in order to be able to take up the work, but it was their own perseverance and the undaunted courage with which they bore the hardships and privations incidental to the undertaking that assured success. To say that the Jew is no farmer is simply stating an accepted fact, but to maintain that he will not become a successful farmer is a grave error. What the few hundred Jews have attained and are attaining by tilling the soil in our western states, many thousands of the Jewish poor that at present are crowding the settlements in the cities will attain if they are given the chance. This fact cannot be too strongly emphasized. In the face of existing conditions, under which it is apparent that the Jewish centre of gravity is shifting from the Russian Pale of Settlement to America, the fact that the Jew will successfully work as an agriculturist is of the utmost importance; it is the essential in the proper adjustment of the social-economic position of the Jew in America. Whatever might have been the political, economic, and religious condition of the Jew in the old world, here in America his complete emancipation can be accomplished. Nothing will aid more effectively in the consummation of this end than his employment at agriculture.















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